THE WORLD AS I HEAR IT.

L.V. HALL

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L. V. Hall

THE

WORLD AS I HEAR IT

Containing Reminiscences of Institution Life, How Do the Blind See, Night Thoughts, Gold Worshippers, and other Productions in Prose and Verse never before Published in Book Form.

By LANSING V. HALL.

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

FIRST EDITION.

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DEDICATION.

When I find a book that has no dedication page, I very naturally infer that the author has no friends. To avoid this suspicion, I have been searching about among my numerous relatives and acquaintances, to find some one who would bear modestly and gracefully the honor which might be thus suddenly heaped upon him. From among many who have shown themselves worthy of my gratitude and esteem, by their sympathy, benevolence, courtesy, and uniform kindness, I have selected my long-tried, faithful friend and classmate, the trusted confidant of my youth, the discreet counselor of my manhood, the co-partner and fellow laborer of many of my literary toils, and the cheerful, hopeful Christian companion of my age, William Artman of East Sparta, to whom is inscribed this little volume,

By his grateful friend,

LANSING V. HALL.

PREFACE.

A FORMAL introduction to a stranger is always more or less embarrassing, because we do not know his tastes and feelings, nor what topic of conversation will please him. But if we wish to make a favorable impression, we usually put the best foot forward, and turn out the brightest side of our characters. This kind of uncertainty, diffidence and trepidation, I always feel in coming before the public with a new book. Aware that the first impressions of my readers will have much to do with their judgments and opinions of the whole work, I find the preface the most important, and most difficult part of my book to write.

It has long been customary for authors to apologise for afflicting the world with their productions. This has always seemed to me a ridiculous custom. Why should writers be more modest than other men? When farmers and manufacturers bring their products into market, they do not hesitate to recommend them even above their real merits. Why then should not artists, thought-venders, and book-mongers, praise their own

wares? I have labored hard with body and mind, and under the most trying circumstances, to prepare what I trust will prove to be a very readable book; and have written every line with my own hand, without help or suggestion from any one; and if I must offer any apology whatever, it should be for publishing a new book just at this unpropitious time. But shall I wait for better times and lie idly on my oars while those depending upon my efforts are denied the comforts and privileges that others enjoy? Should I not put forth every exertion to secure means requisite for the support and education of my young family, or Micawber-like shall I "wait for something to turn up?" Surely, my friends would not advise a delay that must prove so disastrous.

My first design was to collect my contributions to the newspapers for the past few years, and publish a neat little volume of poems; but remembering that I had reached a period of life when the fires of poesy begin to burn more dimly, when stars and flowers look less inviting than bread and beef; remembering that I had wandered through nearly every state in the Union, that during my intercourse with men I have been asked many thousand questions about the blind, and that my life in some respects had been rather rich in experiences, I changed my plan materially, and concluded to publish a miscel-

lany of prose and verse, replete with my own observations, and embodying answers to many important questions. I do not expect it will please and interest everybody, for the author, I find, does not.

I have felt from time to time impelled to publish either in book form, or through the newspapers my ideas and impressions of the world, and of my surroundings, because I know that people have an excusable curiosity to learn what blind persons can find to think about.

Besides, I meet with less natural obstacles in selling a book, than in any other pursuit, and less difficulty in bringing men to understand that a person without sight may think as profoundly, reason as logically, and arrive at conclusions quite as just as those who possess the organs of vision, provided his mind is well stored with facts and useful knowledge.

Finally, as my chances in manual labor, and in the various business pursuits, are not equal to the opportunities of men with sight, I have been induced to publish occasionally my productions in book form, to offer them to the public in person, not intending to *force* my writings upon the world, but to sell the products of my mind, as other men bring into market the produce of their land, or any article of manufacture or workmanship.

Should the reader find in these pages faults and errors, he need not take to himself too much credit for the discovery, for the author is painfully conscious of their presence, and hopes they will not be charged to his lack of sight, as is sometimes done when great faults appear in the writings of the blind, but rather to a lack of artistic skill, and power to produce what a refined taste approves,—in a word, to his misfortune in not having been born a Milton or a Homer.

L. V. Hall.

Dansville, N. Y.

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INTRODUCTION.

I KNOW of no better way to introduce a book to the public, than by introducing its author. I seldom read a book of character and worth, without feeling a keen desire to know something more of the author, of his surroundings, his habits, his temperament, and the incidents of his life which have set in motion particular trains of thought, without falling or rising into sympathy with all his moods of mind, and wishing to learn more of his individuality than I can gather from his works.

We who find ourselves in a world of solid material, stubborn facts, and rough experiences, without the important sense of sight to keep us from bumping our heads against walls, or snubbing against lamp-posts, or dropping suddenly into yawning cellars, are compelled to adopt expedients and methods that people with perfect sight have no occasion to use. We have, therefore, a life history peculiar to our condition. It would not be possible for me in this brief sketch, to enter into a detail of all the many devices employed by us, for the accom-

plishment of those things that seem so inexplicable to our friends, and to the world of eyes; and, indeed, if I were to try, I should find it impossible to make myself understood.

I am frequently stopped on the street by men who only wish to inquire if I know just where I am, where I am going, and whom I have the honor of talking with. This would provoke a saint to open profanity, if he did not take into consideration the fact that men have very inquiring minds, and women a curiosity that must be gratified. Again, my hand is seized by some one who wishes to be recognized, but does not choose to speak, knowing that the voice would betray his identity. In this way I am often held in speechless suspense for many seconds, and even minutes, which, as may be well imagined, is very embarrassing. Sometimes a friend assumes a false tone of voice, to test my ability to recognize persons by their voices; but in which, I am happy to say, they seldom succeed in misleading me,—my ear detecting certain sounds which they do not know how to conceal. This always seems to me about as absurd, as it would be for a person on meeting a friend, to distort his countenance into a horrible grimace, to see if his friend would recognize him. Of these little pleasantries, however, I do not complain, but only mention them

to show how little the mental condition of the blind is understood and appreciated.

I trust it will not be thought an unpardonable egotism, if I speak in this connection of the methods by which I arrange my thoughts, ideas and sentiments, into prose or verse; and how it may be supposed I am able to gain a knowledge of the many grand and beautiful things in nature, that light and color can only reveal to those who see. Very much of this knowledge, I apprehend, is received from books, from public lectures, and from the conversation of well informed, refined, and cultured people; but mainly through the other senses, which I possess in great perfection. Besides, there is a world of fancy in every mind, corresponding to the physical or outer world. This may be filled with beauty and harmony, aye,—even lighted up with imaginary sun, moon and stars. My method of preparing a poem, or any article for the press, has always been by dictation to an amanuensis; having first arranged in my mind, and committed to memory, the entire performance. Of late, I have found it easier to write my thoughts as they occur to me, in my own hand, with a pencil, to be copied in ink. The art of literary and musical composition is not beyond the reach of the blind. Correct and elegant language may be acquired, by which original thoughts

may be expressed, and so complete a knowledge of the science of harmony may be had, and skill to execute the most difficult composition, that true genius is often shown both in the musical and literary productions of the blind. Poetic or musical inspiration may be drawn from an ideal world, as well as from a real one. Milton sung of heaven, and filled it with creations of his own fancy. Blind Tom peoples his world with beings quite as wonderful, and draws inspiration from nature, as she comes to him in the sounds of singing brooks, sighing winds, and whispering leaves.

If I have succeeded in introducing myself to the reader, I now beg leave to introduce my little book, and bespeak for it a kind reception. Should you find it dull, tame, insipid, or even stupid, do not throw it aside, wipe your critical glasses and say: "Well, that is just what one might expect from a writer who has never *seen* the world he attempts to describe. His imagery is unnatural, his ideas obscure, his words ill chosen, and indeed the whole work is indicative of his condition." Please do not say this, but rather say, "Hall is not a born poet; he has never felt the fervor of poetic inspiration, and deserves not a place among the illustrious blind, whose sublime thoughts and grand conceptions gem the pages of classic literature." Be just without prejudice, and I will abide the result.

REMINISCENCE OF SIGHTLESS CHILDHOOD.

I KNEW a child near forty years ago,
To whose blue eyes the light but dimly came;
Whose lonely lot was rendered doubly so,
By finding few companions who could claim
His confidence, or share his childish play.
For well he loved the sports of other boys,
And often whiled the tedious hours away
By singing, jumping, and by boisterous noise.
His parents were poor but honest country folk,
Who lived far out from city's busy hum,
Among the hills, whose echoes never woke
With the boom of cannon nor the beat of drum.
He never heard the organ's solemn swell,
Nor merry bells ring out the Christmas chime;
His music came from meadow, grove and dell,
From rushing flood, and thunder's voice sublime.
His lack of vision made his hearing keen;
What others could not hear his ear took in;
The pleasure others found in landscape scene,
He found in noisy Nature's ceaseless din;

In song of birds, in crash of falling trees,
The summer torrents and the brumal blasts,
The chirp of insects and the hum of bees,
And rustling leaves where light-winged zephyrs passed.
All these to him suggested themes for thought,
And to his struggling mind gave forms and facts.
He knew the groaning tree to the ground was brought
By sharp, resounding blows of the woodman's axe.
He traced its 'cumbent trunk from limb to butt,
And felt the stump on which the giant stood;
He found its glossy leaves and toothsome nut,
And named the hickory monarch of the wood.
He climbed the hills, and measured with his mind
Their hight above the level land below;
He climbed the trees and felt their fruits, to find
How the apple, peach and pear and cherries grow.
And he would sit, on many a summer night,
And listen to the sounds from meadow marsh;
The piping frog and newt gave him delight,
While to all other ears their songs were harsh.
He thought the distant stars were silver bells,
With golden tongues that tinkled as they swung;
That e'en the moon where airless silence dwells,
Her minor music on the night air flung.

And he did hear, and now records with care,
Strange voices in the silent winter's night,
Sweet music floating on the pulseless air,
When snow lay on the meadows, still and white,
When all the brooks were bound in icy chains,
When all the leaves had fallen from the trees,
When all the birds had flown to summer plains,
And not a whisper floated on the breeze;
Yet strains of marvelous music filled his ear,
Like angels chanting round the throne of God;
Now soft and low, again so full and clear,
That words were almost heard and understood.
Ah! can it be that heaven was then so near
That sounds celestial reached that sinless soul?
That this untaught and sightless child could hear
The rivers of eternal pleasures roll?
If so, oh, Father! bring the wanderer back
To the sweet Eden of his childish bliss.
He asks not day upon his darksome track,
But light divine; oh, Father! grant him this.

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

I DO NOT profess to be a representative man, and may not express in every particular the sentiments of my class, but in behalf of those with whom I have conversed upon the subjects I wish here to present, and who agree with me in opinion, I make this appeal. Do not discourage by underrating, by indifference, or by severe and unjust criticism, the literary efforts of those who are forced to mental labor, because some bodily infirmity precludes the possibility of their competing successfully with other men in the industrial pursuits. Let every one use his own talent. If it prove to be gold, help him to place a true value upon it. If it be silver, teach him that the world has use for such; and if it be only brass, let him know that even the baser metals have a commercial value. I do not insist that the public should buy trash, either in a musical or literary form, because they are the productions of unfortunate people. But if they are readable, or playable, if in conformity with rules of rhetoric or thorough bass, if they afford innocent pleasure and instruction, then it is well, indeed, it

is best to purchase them. After many years of experiment, trial and adaptation of machinery to the uses of the blind, it has been shown that many useful articles can be manufactured by a class of persons who for ages were supposed to be helpless, and must live as pensioners upon public charity. Many of these articles will compare favorably in quality and workmanship, with goods of the same class made by seeing mechanics. There is one drawback, however; we cannot work with the same celerity, hence we can never compete successfully with seeing labor. For this reason we ask public favor to compensate for the obstacles we have to encounter. It seems to me there is a wise policy in extending patronage to the industrious and enterprising blind, and indeed to every person who is trying under difficulties to be useful. If you have a man living in your community who has lost one or both arms, but has a fine voice, and a thorough knowledge of music, give him a place in your church choirs and pay him liberally. Employ him in your families and in every way encourage him to use his remaining faculties for self-support. And if there is a man or a woman among you without sight, who has been educated as a music teacher, or to any of the professions, arts, or trades that come within the scope of possibilities for the blind, give him or her

employment. It is sad to be surrounded by "ever during dark," but sadder still to be unemployed,—to sit and brood over misfortunes that grow more intolerable as we reflect upon them. Cheerful and pleasant friends, steady employment, a consciousness of self-dependence and respectability, are the best antidotes for despondency and melancholy. By all means give the blind something to do. Ascertain how their capabilities can be utilized. If they are limited to only one or two pursuits, encourage them to manly exertions in those directions. Help them to feel that they are numerals, not ciphers in society. If they are educated and refined in feelings, manners and deportment, if they possess good moral character, are trying to maintain honorable and respectable positions among men, and endeavoring to rise above the shadows of the great calamity that rests upon them, I see no reason why they should not be received into good society, and treated in all respects like other men and women. When you meet them do not pass them by in silence, fearing they will not recognize you; for we have many ways of identifying our friends. Speak frankly and cordially, in your natural tone of voice. Do not try foolish experiments upon us to see if we will recognize you. They make us feel awkward and unpleasant. Do not indulge in coarse jokes at our

expense, about the blunders we are liable to make, or the language we use to express our ideas. For example, if I wish to communicate the fact that I have visited and examined (in my way) a public building, or any object of interest, I say I have seen that house, or that thing. If I make the acquaintance of any distinguished man, I say I have seen that man. This may not be strictly true, and yet custom compels us to adopt phrases in common use. Should I use the word feel for see, which would be much nearer the truth, my language would be thought indecent, and would be justly the subject of ridicule. Indeed, with my mind's eye I do see all these things, and they go to make up my world of imagination. The aim of the blind should always be to talk and appear as nearly like other people as possible; and in this I feel we ought to be encouraged. The blind as a class have been charged by some writers with moroseness, irritability and ingratitude. Now I repel this charge as false and groundless; and had I space, would try to vindicate my brothers in affliction from this accusation. It is often remarked that persons without sight are more cheerful than could be expected. We are sometimes sensitive, and show proper resentment when our feelings are trifled with; but are seldom ungrateful to our friends for favors kindly bestowed. This

brings me to speak of the uniform kindness I have always received from the people among whom I have lived. But more especially from the citizens of Dansville, who have always given me liberal patronage in the various enterprises in which I have been engaged, and have many times furnished material aid which has greatly helped me to bear my responsibilities. In all my wanderings, through nearly every state in the union, and the Canadas, I have received only the kindest treatment, and many, very many assurances of respect and esteem. I am convinced that the true passport to the society and confidence of ladies and gentlemen all over the world, is intelligence, moral worth, and correct deportment. Doubtless the magic key that opens men's hearts is gold, but they will open at the touch of human sorrow, borne with cheerful submission. There are born noblemen in free America, as certainly as there are born kings in Europe,—Nature's princes, whose great hearts throb with kindliness and sympathy. Many such men have I met in my wanderings, and will cherish them in my memory while I live. I have often felt, while in the magnificent presence of such men, and while listening to their words of tender regard and disinterested counsel, as Peter must have felt on the Mount of Transfiguration, when he exclaimed, " Lord, it is good

for us to be here." The world in general is not so bad as dyspeptic people think it, and no class of persons have greater evidence of this, than the blind.

We have been the pets of public beneficence. We have institutions of learning, of which the nation has reason to be proud. Nor are we ungrateful for them. We may not have come up to the people's expectation, but great progress has been made, and the condition of the blind, both in this country and Europe is wonderfully improved. Whether we shall be able to utilize the knowledge we have thus received, will depend very much upon public confidence in our capabilities. If you have work that we can do as well as seeing men, give us a fair show. If its accomplishment depends upon a correct and cultivated ear, or on light and sensitive fingers, our chances are more than equal. But should we fail, do not always charge it to a want of sight, but to our stupidity. If I have failed as a writer, do not say it is because eyes are indispensable to mature thought, inventive genius, and a healthy imagination. Read the history of the illustrious blind, and say if mind, heart and soul can not be developed in the darkness.

GOLD WORSHIPPERS.

WITHIN a faded volume, dim and old,
I find this musty maxim tersely given:
"The magic key to human hearts is gold;
But love unlocks the crystal gates of Heaven."

Our homes are not so happy as of old,
Our hearts are not so merry as of yore;
We find that naught can purchase love but gold,
That Virtue begs a pittance at the door.

There was a time when Beauty bore the sway;
There was a time when Wit the world controlled;
There was a time when Valor won the day;
But now the noble knight that wins is Gold.

The ancient Ghebers worshipped light and fire;
The Brahmins bowed to gods of wood and stone;
But now, 'neath marble dome and gilded spire,
The deity adored is gold alone.

It overlays the altar and the cross;
It dignifies the monarch and the clown;
The wealth of moral worth is counted dross;
The million miser wears the golden crown.

'Tis time this mad idolatry should cease;
'Tis time her prophets and her priests were slain;
Let earth do homage to the Prince of Peace,
And the reign of gold shall be the golden reign.

The Christ came not with pomp and princely show;
His followers were lowly and despised;
He courted not the high nor shunned the low;
A very God, in human flesh disguised.

He brought a marvelous message from above,
A gift of grace and pardon from the King;
He claimed no tithe or tribute but of love,—
A penitent and contrite heart to bring.

He banished brokers from the house of prayer,
He raised the dead and made the dumb to speak,
Unsealed the blinded eye, unstopped the ear,
He fed the poor, and lifted up the weak.

The way to life, He said, is plain and straight,
It leads to joy, and peace, and heavenly light:
The way to death is through a golden gate,
And broad the way that leads to endless night.

Shall we accept the sacrifice He made,
And enter in the Shepherd's sheltering fold?
Or like the Judas who his Lord betrayed,
Sell soul and heaven for the miser's gold?

Say, which is best, true piety or gold?
This metal worship or the living God?
Ye can not have them both, as we are told,
See to it, then, which pathway shall be trod.

Array your idol in his robes of state;
Set up his image on his golden throne;
Throw open wide the temple's gilded gate,
And thus proclaim that gold is God alone.

Or else array yourselves in plain attire,
Set up the love of Christ in every heart,
Let each affection feel its fervent fire,
And with this money-worship bear no part.

Now make your choice between your gold and heaven,
Buy all the sinful pleasures wealth can bring,
Increase them through the years to mortals given,
And die at last—a beggar, not a king.

Yes, make your choice between your gold and heaven,
Find peace and pardon in a Savior's blood;
Freely bestow what free to you is given,
And meet at last the welcoming smile of God.

THE WORLD AS I HEAR IT.

In my perambulations through a life of nearly fifty years, not altogether barren of events, I have heard some things that people who have longer ears than mine, do not hear; much that would not be proper to record here, and much that would not do credit to mankind in general. It is a curious fact that people often say ridiculous things in the presence of those who can not see, under the impression that they can not hear. There is also another curious fact, that men and women do not learn how to dissemble with their voices, as they do with their faces. They go about their business, or duties, with a smile of amiability on their faces, while every tone of their voices tells the ear of perplexities, irritability, and a thoroughly sour temper; or that there is sorrow, disappointment, or hatred, deep down in the heart. There are some, however, who think they have learned how to hide their thoughts and feelings from the ear as well as from the eyes, but they do not often succeed well with us whose ears are trained to the most occult qualities, and finest intonations of the human voice.

Dogs, horses, and other domestic animals possess this power of discrimination, so I do not claim for my class any great amount of credit.

The first sounds that probably greeted my ears, came from the bronchials of a kind old aunt, whose voice resembled the raspings of a katydid, or the squeaking of a gate, rather than a vox humana; but no doubt it then sounded melodious to my infant ears. I remember that when a child I used to go to this same old aunty for a sweet baked apple, or a nutcake, a bird cooky, or a double-fist full of real old Yankee pumpkin pie. Even then her voice sounded melodious; but in later years when she used to scold me and the other boys for stealing her bell pears, I thought her voice rather harsh, and her temper not so sweet as the bell pears. I always thought my mother's voice mild and pleasant; and so it was,—blessings on her sweet memory. She was one of the dearest, kindest, and best mothers that a poor sightless boy ever had. Her tones were full of tenderness, love and sympathy, such as I may never hear again this side of heaven. The labors and cares of such a family as hers, would have made most women fretful and impatient; but cold duty was not her incentive to action; hers was a labor of love. She was not dignified, queenly, nor positive, in her manner, but friendly, famil-

iar and very gracious toward her children, and ready to make allowance for all our little foibles. Her early education having been somewhat neglected, her vocabulary was limited, but her flow of words was copious, and her conversation cheerful. Her words of reproof to me were always mild, and her voice gentle, unless I had been engaged in some outlandish piece of boyish mischief, such as committing depredations upon her maple sugar, preserves, or honey, making raids on my sister's work-basket or flower bed, putting split sticks on the dog's tail and ears, the cat's head in a stocking, pins in the chair-bottoms, or thistles in somebody's empty boots. For these and similar pranks, she would often reprove me with words so kind, and in tones so full of sorrow, that they reached my heart more effectually than it could have been reached through my back. Her patient, cheerful christian life, has never lost its influence upon me. The tender, sympathetic tones of her voice, come to me even now in my dreams; and I seem to listen as of old to her counsel, and mild reproof.

I am not a believer in spiritual materialization, but familiar voices of the dear departed sometimes come to me so distinctly as to startle me from a deep revery, or waken me from a protracted dream.

I believe that children have a keener relish for food

than we whose mouths are seared, and nerves or taste blunted by the use of tobacco and other stimulants; and I believe they enjoy pleasant sights and sweet sounds better than we whose senses are satiated, and taste rendered fastidious by too much culture. The first musical sounds that thrilled my soul to its center, that filled my whole being with the most ecstatic joy, that charmed my young heart as it never has been charmed since, were the tones of a cheap two dollar fiddle; and that, too, in the hands of one who at that time could not play a single tune on it. But the new, shrill tones of the catgut were enough for me. I was fascinated, transported,—could only laugh and rub my hands with supreme delight. I was about seven years old, and resolved then and there to learn how to fiddle. This resolution I have kept to the letter, having never made proficiency enough on that instrument to call it violin playing. I have since heard this king of musical instruments played by Ole Bull, and other master performers. I have heard Jenny Lind, the Black Swan, and other popular singers. I have heard oratorios, operas, philharmonic concerts, and many first-class musical entertainments in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and other large cities; but I have never heard any thing that so thoroughly delighted me, that so

thrilled and tickled me, from the very roots of my hair to the tips of my toes, as that two dollar fiddle. I would give my interest in the new pipe organ of the new M. E. church of this town to be so tickled again.

It is thought by some scientists that insects, and some of the brute creation can hear sounds that we of the human species can not hear. This may be true. Many of the animals and insects which we think are silent, may have voices perceptible to finer ears than ours. The human ear cannot hear a tone above a certain pitch. The vibrations are too quick to act upon the tympanum, or to be appreciated except by a fine organism. I apprehend that this may be attained to some extent by culture. I think, too, that a want of sight from birth, creates such a necessity as to force the cultivation of the ear, to that extent that we can hear sounds, and qualities of sound that others do not hear.

On meeting with a stranger I have been frequently prepossessed as to the character of the person, sometimes favorably, and sometimes unfavorably. These impressions a better acquaintance has sometimes proved false, but almost invariably proved correct. My opinion is made up, mainly, I think, from what I hear in the tones of the voice. There are oral qualities of the voice that indicate the moral and mental status of the man or

woman, as emphatically as the visible expression of the face can do it. It may be difficult for me to define this test, so that the reader will catch my meaning. If he has ever observed that a long-nosed, sharp-chinned, black-eyed woman, with a spit-fire expression on her whole visage, has usually a husky, waspish voice, that she speaks with a rapid, spiteful utterance, making each word sound as if it had been spit at you; if the reader has given this subject any thought, he will have some clue to my meaning. Rapid, or slow utterance, indicates the temperament; but the quality of the voice tells the condition of mind. When I meet with a man or woman of scholarly attainments, with broad and liberal views, a large heart and tender sympathies, I commonly find a voice in keeping with such a character,—a full, round, resonant voice, deep, and often grave in a man; a rich contralto, or pure soprano in a woman, with a sound of thought and culture about it, that makes every tone tell of the lady or gentleman. When I meet with a person of a satirical, or sarcastic mold of mind, whose wit is made a weapon, and whose words sting like bees, I usually find a sharp, cold, ringing voice, with no sympathy in its tones, and no mercy in its accents. A humorist, who uses his wit to excite mirth, has a different quality of voice. It is commonly clear and ringing, but

warm, sympathetic, and often tender. It is cheerful, and capable of many modulations. A pious voice has still other qualities of tone that can easily be heard. A man or woman who wishes to make a show of his or her religion, falls naturally into the habit of speaking in a sanctimonious tone of voice. It has a sorrowful, melancholy tinge, but usually so thin that the devil shines through. I have often heard such people talk at love-feasts, when to my ear, every word had the hiss of the serpent that lay coiled in the heart. I find that the voices of people who enjoy their religion, are cheerful, hopeful, kind, merciful, and sympathetic; while those who regard religion as a cross and a burden, have a sound of weariness and apprehension about their voices, as if they lived in constant fear of coming short in some duty, known or unknown. Of course the opinions we may form of people, whether from voice or face, will always be more or less affected by our prejudices, or by what we may have heard of the fruits they bear. But when we meet with a total stranger, of whose antecedents we know nothing, whose record is with God, and not in our reach, then our opinions will be unbiassed. In pursuing my business as a book agent, it has been my privilege to meet and converse with thousands of men and women of all classes and conditions. The

necessity of learning something of their character and feelings, has made me a close observer of the human voice. I believe that the blind are as capable of reading character, as they who see; and that the analysis of voices would be an interesting study for any one. I get my knowledge of the world of mankind, mainly through this medium; and although I often make egregious blunders in forming my conclusions, I find that other men do the same.

The first great orator I ever heard was Daniel Webster, in an address to the people of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1847. I do not now recall a single word that he said, but his voice still rings in my memory. It was one of those deep, baritone voices, that not only fills the ear, but fills the soul, and sends its echoes to the most sacred chambers of the heart. I have since heard the voices of Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Thomas H. Benton, Lewis Cass, Stephen A. Douglass, Frederick Douglass, Gerritt Smith, Joshua R. Giddings, Tom Corwin, Salmon P. Chase, Charles Sumner, and many more of our great American orators and statesmen, but I have never heard a grander, or more impressive voice, than that of Daniel Webster. The immortal Clay had a very deep, dignified voice, that expressed great strength and nobility of character, and so had the great Benton,

and General Cass, and Gerritt Smith. All these men of mighty intellect and high purposes, had voices indicating great will-power, coupled with great vital force and physical endurance. One thing I have observed that may be worthy of mention. I have rarely heard rich, resonant, or even cheerful voices come from puny, sickly people, however well cultivated. There must be health of body and mind,—there must be cultivation of the intellectual faculties, and of the moral sentiments, to have a full, round, rich, melodious voice. Where there are great bodily infirmities, I seldom find that cheerful, metallic ring about the voice, and yet I did know one exception to this general rule. A late deceased clergyman of this town, who labored for the Master to the very last moment of his life, had a voice which was always clear and pleasant, even cheerful and happy; and yet a post mortem showed nearly all his vital organs badly diseased, and he must have suffered great bodily pain; but I never heard a peevish or complaining tone in his voice.

It would be well for students of law and theology, to remember that if they want full, rich, resonant voices, they must have bodies in proportion to their minds. Can we expect as much power, volume, compass and variety, from a small reed organ, as from a large pipe

organ, with all the pipes, keys, stops and combinations necessary to perform one of Handel's grand choruses? Can we expect a thin, bent-backed, narrow chested man or woman, whose lungs have been sacrificed to brain making, to have as much volume of voice as a man who stands erect as God made him, who inhales and respires pure air with a capacity of lungs like a blacksmith's bellows, whose voice like Goliath's can be heard in the camp of his enemies, or modulated to the tender tones of a nursery song? I believe there is nothing short of the archangel's silver trump so grand, so stirring and awakening as the great voice of a great man.

I have made the tones of the human voice, as a medium of thought and feeling, the study of my life. When but a child I knew when my parents and others were pleased or displeased with me, if I could but hear the slightest sound of their voices, without a word of reproof. It has always been an open door to the heart and conscience of those with whom I have come in contact. It tells the ear of every mood of mind, and impulse of the heart; of every dormant passion and lust, of moral excellence, or low and sensual tastes, of refinement or grossness of feeling, and in fact, every phase of character.

While a pupil at the New York Institute for the blind,

I had an opportunity to study character as manifested through the voice. Not only of the officers, teachers and pupils, whose salient points and weaknesses I knew, but the great minds, hearts and sympathies of illustrious men and women, who used to visit our Institution. We were always delighted to have celebrities come to see us, and to let us see them through their voices. Among such notables as I can remember were the immortal Clay, James K. Polk, General Winfield Scott, Thomas H. Benton, members of the New York and New Jersey legislatures, Forrest, the great tragedian, and Martin F. Tupper, the small English poet. Of all these, we thought that Mr. Clay made us the best speech, and Mr. Polk the poorest. I well remember the contrast between their voices, and manner of addressing us. Mr. Clay confessed himself embarrassed, for almost the first time in his life. He said, as nearly as I can recall his kind speech, "My dear young friends, I feel, for some reason inexplicable to myself, a degree of awkwardness and embarrassment that I have never felt in the presence of any public assembly. I can see your thoughtful and emotional faces, but you cannot see mine. This makes me feel sad. I can see that many of you are educated men and women,—that you are not ignorant, as persons of your class must be without an Institution of learning

like this. Of your way of seeing me, I am ignorant, except it be through this poor, worn-out, broken-down voice of mine. But I know you can hear my words, and I feel that you can penetrate my thoughts and motives, and the hidden chambers of my heart better than people can whose eyes I can look into." I do not claim to give Mr. Clay's words verbatim at this late date, but it contained so much that was inspiring and encouraging to us, so few reminders of our common misfortune, so much genuine appreciation of the progress we were making against the obstacles that hedged up our way, that I have never forgotten it. Mr. Polk accompanied Mr. Clay, and after we had sung The Star Spangled Banner in full chorus, the little ex-president, in a light, thin voice, which we all thought in admirable keeping with the caliber of the man, addressed us. I will not attempt now to give even a synopsis of this speech. I remember it was kind, but humiliating to us; full of commiseration for our sightless condition, and in a general way depreciating. I remember that in answer to the comments and criticisms made by the boys on the comparative greatness of the two men, and the difference between their voices, a chum of mine made this apologetic remark: "You can not expect a pistol to give as loud a report as a cannon."

I think we were favorably impressed with the magnificent voice of Mr. Forrest, with its great depth, power and flexibility, the capability of its modulation to produce the highest histrionic effects, and so transparent as to show every shade of feeling. It was a voice both emotional and devotional. I have never heard the Lord's prayer given with such power by any clergyman as by Edwin D. Forrest.

We had also the good fortune, about this time, to hear the magnificent voice of the Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind. I had long heard of her as a popular favorite; of the gratulations she had received in England and America, amounting almost to adoration, and I had tried to imagine what her voice must be like. I had fancied that a voice so powerful, so rich and harmonious as hers, must be like the diapason of a great organ, loud, full and rapturous, with no tones of tenderness, for the heart bowed down with sorrow. But almost the first sound of her voice dispelled this illusion, and showed me how tame had been my conception of her remarkable genius, her artistic skill, and her vocal powers. She visited our Institution with but few friends and attendants, with no show of ostentation or pampered conceit, expressed a desire to see the pupils, to hear us sing, and to gratify us in return by singing for us. I

well remember when it was announced to us that Jenny Lind was in the parlor and wished to see us in the chapel; what expressions of wild delight, what transports of joy and pleasure we all gave vent to. We were soon seated in the chapel, in a very orderly and decorous manner, and were requested to sing Mendelssohn's "Beautiful Primrose." Jenny Lind was then introduced to the officers and pupils by the Superintendent who said: "Teachers and pupils, we have the honor to receive a visit from a lady of whose musical powers you have heard much, and whom you will now have the pleasure to hear for yourselves. The justly celebrated vocalist, Miss Jenny Lind is present, and has consented to favor us"—Here the speaker's voice was drowned in a storm of applause, such as I have seldom heard from the inmates of our Institution on any great occasion. Without ceremony the great singer threw her bonnet in a vacant chair, seated herself at the piano, and with her own accompaniment, poured out such a flood of rich and sparkling melody as I had never supposed could come from any human throat. She trilled and warbled like a bird, she executed the most rapid and difficult runs and shakes, she produced the crescendo, from the faintest murmur to a tone of the most wonderful power and volume I have ever heard. She also had the ven-

triloquist's faculty of throwing her voice so that it seemed to come from above. To me, it was all celestial,—all divine. I could have fallen down that moment and worshipped her. After the song was ended, in a few simple words, with a Swedish accent, she said, (as nearly as I can now remember,) "My dear young friends, it has given me great pleasure to visit your beautiful home; to see you, and to hear you sing; and I hope my little song has pleased you."

Her voice in speaking was not clear and sweet as I had anticipated, but it was one of those mild, pleasant, contralto voices, that speaks of a great, noble and generous soul, of a loving heart, of quick sympathies, of kind impulses, and of domestic tastes and habits.

I heard her sing once afterward under more favorable circumstances, at one of her inimitable concerts, before a delighted New York audience. This was a musical feast that seldom falls to the lot of mortals to enjoy. In rendering "I know that my Redeemer liveth," from Handel's "Messiah," her purity and flexibility of voice, her evident conception and transmutation of the great master's thoughts and feelings, so charmed and melted the hearts of her hearers, that nearly the entire audience were in tears, and many of the old musical veterans in the orchestra wept like children. I heard but

one unfavorable criticism. After she had sung her favorite song, "I have left my snow-clad hills," I heard a lady sitting just behind me remark, with all a mother's fondness in her voice, "I believe my Mary can sing almost as well as that. She has a slight cold in her head, but when her voice is clear, it is almost as sweet as Jenny Lind's, and I believe in my soul I had rather hear her."

In the winter of 1856-7, I visited Washington, where, during the few weeks I remained there, I found frequent opportunities to be present at the grave deliberations of the senate, and the stormy, indecorous debates of the house of representatives. Here I continued my study of voices, with much interest and profit. In the senate I heard a great many noble voices, as indicative, I doubt not, of large minds, broad views, high attainments, and exalted character as could have been seen in those grave, dignified faces. In the house, the qualities of voices differed somewhat. There were a few electric voices that fascinated and held the ear a willing captive, but more of the fulminating, stormy kind, that made up in noise what they lacked in logic and intellectual force.

The most magnetic voice I have ever heard is that of Henry Ward Beecher. There is something about it, as indescribably and indisputably original, as the man him-

self. It fascinates you by its magnetism, it astonishes you by its compass and distinctness, it impresses you with its pathos, it charms you with its musical cadences, and holds you spell-bound with its endless variety of changing modulations. I have heard this prince of pulpit orators many times, both in Plymouth church and in lecture halls. If he has an equal for magnetic power of voice, and for natural and forcible illustrations, for the sudden surprises he gives one by introducing a new thought in a new place,—if there is another orator combining all these remarkable qualities like Mr. Beecher, it has never been my good fortune to hear him.

It is several years since I have heard Dr. E. H. Chapin, but the echoes of his full, clear, sonorous voice, still linger in my memory. He is an eloquent speaker, earnest and stirring, and brings his hearers into the closest sympathetic relations with him. His style of oratory is unique and faultless, but his voice is not magnetic like Beecher's. It has a great compass, is flexible, and under complete control. It has in it the qualities that speak of benevolence, charity and all the Christian graces, but it does not excite to mirth, or melt to tears, like the magical voice of Henry Ward Beecher.

The reader may be curious to know whether we who are without sight can hear any difference between the

qualities of a negro's voice, and the voices of the white race. Whenever I am asked this question I answer emphatically, yes. There is a thin, empty, fuzzy tone about a negro's voice, that denotes shallowness of character, feebleness of intellect, and grossness of tastes and feelings, while the voice of a white man is commonly clear, ringing, resonant, or deep, firm and commanding. These qualities of voice indicate brilliancy of intellect, nobility of character, a rich inheritance of moral proclivities, courage, high aspirations, &c. Of course there are exceptions to these general rules, and the grandest I ever knew is the cultivated voice, mind and manners, of Frederick Douglass. For scholarly attainments, inventive genius, vigorous intellect, and impressive style of oratory, he is acknowledged the peer of our best American journalists and lecturers. I read his paper, published in Rochester, N. Y., for many years, and thought it very ably edited. I have heard him speak many times, and on many interesting occasions, and I have never heard an orator that so warmed my heart, and stirred my feelings as Frederick Douglass. I have long wished for an opportunity to express my admiration for this wonderful man ; for his grand achievements under difficulties, for his victory over cruel prejudices and oppression, for the ingenious manner in which he

escaped from a bondage worse than death, and for the energy and talents by which he has raised himself to an equality with his white brothers.

Although Frederick Douglass is a cultivated man and is half Caucasian, yet his voice is decidedly negro. The fuzzy, husky qualities, that denote strong animal passions and lusts, are smoothed out by culture, and a general refinement of his whole nature ; but that thin, reedy, empty tone of voice, so characteristic of the race is still observable, and to my ear detracts somewhat from the pleasure of hearing him speak. I have heard him, however, discourse on his favorite theme, viz.: the injustice and cruelty of human bondage, when his soul seemed all on fire, when his voice rung like a clarion, when his great heart seemed ready to break with the wrongs and sufferings of his people, when his yellow skin seemed ready to burst with the flood of eloquence that poured from his throat ; and I thought, surely a white soul may dwell in a black body.

I have traveled much in the southern states, conversed with the colored people, heard them sing, pray, preach, and swear, and I have always been able to distinguish between the voices of white men and colored men. In women the difference is still more noticeable. The voice of a negress is commonly coarse, rough and

spongy, indicating a coarse nature, sensual desires, and strong animal passions; while the voices of white women though sometimes pitched low in the scale are usually firmer, purer, sweeter and more musical, with a bell-like ring, that tells the practiced ear of a finer organism, purer thoughts and desires, and of a more exalted nature. The difference between the voices of a pure minded woman, and of one with low, sensual tastes and feelings, is as strikingly perceptible to my ear, as the difference between the tones of a silver bell, and one cast from the coarsest brass. I have sometimes heard mulatto girls speak with quite pretty, feminine voices; but these are the exceptions, and they doubtless inherited their sweet voices as well as their beauty from their white progenitors.

The funny friend of my childhood was an old negro man, who had been the slave of my uncle, and was the general favorite of all the children in the neighborhood. His voice was as fuzzy as the skin of a peach, and I used to think the wool on his head made it so. He had a regular negro laugh, that always ended in a short, hacking cough. He could sing songs, and tell the most impossible ghost and witch stories that ever frightened a poor nervous boy into the belief that an invisible something was lurking in every dark corner to catch

him by the heels. This negro was a fair specimen, in voice, mind and character, of the superstitious and uneducated men of his race, as I have since learned.

Dr. McCune Smith, who was chairman of the radical abolition convention in Syracuse in 1858, had a mild, pleasant, tenor voice, that sounded very scholarly. He is nearly white, however, and no trace of the negro qualities of voice remains.

I did not hear the Black Swan speak, but her voice in singing had a marvelous compass and power. It was said she could sing down to G, the first line of the bass staff.

Blind Tom has all the characteristics of the negro, both in speech and action. His voice is thin and cracked, and his pronunciation anglo-African.

I think also, that men and women of different nationalities, have voices peculiar to each; that an Irishman's voice differs from a German's, and an Englishman's from a Frenchman's, an American's from a Chinaman's, and that these differences can be distinguished by the sound of their voices, without hearing a word of their vernacular. It is possible that climate may have something to do with the qualities of voices. I have observed that in humid localities the people speak with a nasal twang, while in places where the air is hot and dry, their voices are low, faint, and feeble, and where the atmos-

phere is dry and cool, a man will shout in one's ear in a stentorian voice as clear and ringing as a bugle note.

If the eye is love's tell tale, the voice is as surely the messenger of anger. I need not hear an oath or a spiteful word, to know that a man or woman is angry. The agitation and huskiness of the voice tell it in language plainer than words. This is true of all the passions.

I come lastly to speak of the world as I hear it in the song of birds and insects, in the voices of the brute creation, in the murmuring brooks, the whispering winds, the rustling leaves, the roaring floods, the dashing waves, the howling storm, and the crashing thunder. All these sounds are to my ear significant of natural beauty, order, harmony, grandeur, majesty, and sublimity. They speak of the infinite power, wisdom and goodness of God. They tell me that God made all his creatures to be happy. That order is the great law of the universe. That pleasure, not pain is God's benison to man. That as morning succeeds the night, as sunshine succeeds the shadows, as calm succeeds the storm, so our troubles and sorrows, pains and afflictions are but the passing chord in the great harmony of nature, whose modulation shall resolve at last into the sweet peace and everlasting joys of heaven, where the key note is praise to God who hath made us and given us life, and to Him who hath redeemed us from death by giving his life for us.

EYES OF THE SOUL.

WHAT shall we think that hath not been thought?
Or, what shall we teach that has not been taught?
Or, what shall we bring that has not been brought
From the mystical depths of mind?
One fact I find, that has not been lifted
From a cloud of doubt that has not been rifted;
'Tis this, that the human soul is gifted
With a sense that is never blind.

It can see, though the organ of sight be dead;
Can perceive, though all light from the eye be fled;
Can behold, though each nervous fibre and thread
Be torn from the mortal eye.
It is not confined to its temple of clay,
But reaches out into glorious day,
And throbs with the thrust of each vibrant ray,
As it darts from the sunlit sky.

It is not encased in a dungeon drear,
But surrounds the man like an atmosphere;
Ah, who hath not felt its presence near,
When a noble heart is found!
We name its influence magnetism;
Its manifestation spiritism;
And naught but the grossest skepticism
Will dare dispute the ground.

This spiritual atmosphere, or soul,
Is subject to the mind's control,
And grows or shrinks as the seasons roll,
  As knowledge is sought or refused.
The works of God are its daily food,
His universe its latitude;
And when its powers are understood,
  Its laws will be less abused.

The small-souled man may walk the earth,
And boast his titles, wealth, or birth;
But his heart finds one perpetual dearth,
  And his hungry soul no food.
The large-souled man may walk the world,
His flag of love and truth unfurled,
And never a lip of scorn is curled;
  That man is the friend of God.

Blot out his vision—yet he sees;
Doom him to silence—the world is his;
Rob him of freedom—yet he lives,
  And moves the mighty throng.
His noble presence still is felt,
His magic words inspire or melt,
And all his blows are at evil dealt,
  With either sword or song.

HOW DO THE BLIND SEE?

THIS MAY be regarded by some as a paradoxical question; and yet it is not, if we accept the word see, in its fullest and broadest sense. Webster defines the verb to see, as follows: "To perceive by mental vision; to form an idea or conception of; to discern; to distinguish; to understand; to comprehend." True, we do not see through the same medium that you do who have perfect organs of sight, but we certainly perceive and comprehend the relation and condition of things about us. The Creator has so wisely made, and beautifully adjusted the external organs of sense one to another, and each to all, that when one is lacking, the others are made able by greater exercise to perform the functions of the missing one. For example; if one loses his hearing, sight is rendered keener, and the nerves acquire a sensitiveness almost painful. Dr. Kitto, who was deaf from twelve years of age, speaks of this peculiar sensitiveness as follows: "The drawing of furniture as tables or chairs over the floor above or below me, the shutting of doors, and the feet of children at play,

distress me far more than the same causes would do if I were in actual possession of my hearing. By being unattended by any circumstances or preliminaries, they startle dreadfully; and by the vibration being diffused from the feet over the whole body, they shake the whole nervous system, in a way which even long use has not enabled me to bear."

In the same interesting chapter on percussions he says: "A few days since, when I was seated with the back of my chair facing a chiffonier, the door of this receptacle was opened by some one, and swung back so as to touch my hair. The touch could not but have been slight, but to me the concussion was dreadful, and almost made me scream with the surprise and pain,—the sensation being very similar to that which a heavy person feels on touching the ground, when he has jumped from a higher place than he ought. Even this concussion, to me so violent and distressing, had not been noticed by any one in the room but myself."

This physiological phenomenon is analagous to the sensations experienced by the blind, on approaching any tall or broad object. We feel their presence when we are several yards from them. I have sometimes been startled by the sudden impression produced by a lamp-post, or tree, when in fact it was a yard or more

from me. The sensation is somewhat like receiving a smart blow in the face. I am frequently aware of passing a building while riding along a country road, and the proximity of trees, fences, and other objects is quite perceptible.

This is not a latent sense developed by circumstances as some have supposed, but a wonderful acuteness of the nerves of the face, and more particularly of the eyelids. These phenomena may, I think, be explained in this way. When one of the superior senses is absent, the perceptive force that has watched at the eye, or listened at the ear, is now transferred to the other nerves of sensation. In other words, a deaf person is all eyes, and extremely alive to tangible percussions, as will be seen in the case of Dr. Kitto and others. The blind are all ears and fingers, and certain of the interior animals are said to be all ears and heels; I am not sure but there is some neck in both cases. Since it has been shown that new perceptions and conditions are developed in the absence of one or more of the superior senses, that the deaf are so keenly cognisant of vibration or jar, which is the father of sound, that the blind can feel the presence of objects at short distances, which is analagous to sight, it should not be thought strange that we make such frequent use of the word see, or that the deaf

should make use of the word hear, and that these words are not without significance or import.

Besides this there is a mental perception, (doubtless through a magnetic medium), of the presence or nearness of other minds. This accords with the experience of many persons. I have frequently entered rooms that I supposed to be unoccupied, judging from the silence that reigned, but on taking an inventory of my feelings, I found a consciousness of some one's presence, and this I have done when not the slightest sound aroused my suspicions. A little incident that occurred while I was a teacher in the New York Institution for the blind, will perhaps better illustrate this point. I called one evening at the matron's room, to ask her to read a letter which had just been handed me. Supposing it to be a confidential one, and wishing to make sure that no one else was in the room, I inquired of the matron if she was alone. On receiving an affirmative answer, I handed her the letter, requesting her to read it. But feeling a consciousness that some other mind was present,—a strange mind, with which I had no sympathy, I walked round to the other end of the table, and placed my hand on a lady's shoulder, remarking to the matron that I felt sure there was some one in the room beside herself, and asked that the letter might be returned to me unopened.

From the long known existence of this perception or intuition, has grown the old adage, "The devil is always near at hand when you are talking about him." I am not sure that this magnetic condition is more largely developed in us than in those who see, but I am led to think it is for this reason: eyes are of paramount importance to those who have them; and we who have them not, search for other media of communication. Mental presence is either inspiring and assuring, or depressing and embarrassing. I have observed that when in the presence of some people I have felt comfortable and assured, while in the presence of others I have felt diffident and uneasy. I allude here to persons with whom I had no previous acquaintance. Minds are felt in a ratio proportionate to their will-power. Shallow, conceited minds are not magnetic. I have been told by blind preachers, public lecturers, and concert singers, that they always feel the difference between an intelligent and appreciative audience, and one made up of coarse and uncultured people; and this consciousness they have felt before any demonstrations of applause or disapprobation were made. I have had many opportunities to experiment on my own feelings, in relation to this magnetic influence, or mental recognition. I was a concert singer in my younger days, and could always

tell whether I was singing to a large or small house, and whether my audience was in sympathy with me or not. If it is urged that I gained this knowledge through the ear, and not through the magnetic medium that I suppose to exist, I will add other experiences that may be more convincing to the reader. In pursuing my business as an itinerant bookseller for many years, I have frequently called at offices when their occupants were out, and on entering have often said to my guide, "Oh, there is no one here, let us go, and call again." On the other hand, I have often been conscious when entering a room, that there was not only one mind, but several minds present. If I should be asked to describe this consciousness, or mental recognition, I should not know what language to employ. These are some of the compensations which the blind receive for the great loss they have sustained. The sense of smell is ranked as the least important of all the senses; yet it is of great value to the blind. Through this avenue to the mind come many pleasurable sensations. By it we are aided in the selection of our food, in choosing ripe and healthful fruits, in detecting decomposition, dirt and filth, and in ascertaining much that eyes discover to those who have them. Without it, flowers would have no attraction for us, and life would lack many of its pleasures.

At the risk of being classed among dogs and vultures, I acknowledge that I am often guided by my olfactories in doing things that seem so very unaccountable to my friends. In passing along the business street, my attention is continually attracted by the odors that issue from stores, shops, saloons, etc.; and these peculiar smells often direct me to the very place I wish to find. From groceries come the odors of spices, fish, soaps, etc. From clothing and dry goods stores the smell of dye stuffs. From drugs and medicines, the combined odor of many thousand volatile substances,—such as perfumes, paints and oils, asafœtida, etc. From shoe stores comes the smell of leather; and from books and stationery, the smell of printer's ink. Hotels, saloons and liquor stores, emit that unmistakable odor of alcohol, the prince of poisons. To me the smell of alcohol, wines, etc., has always since my earliest recollection been grateful and fascinating; and had I cultivated an appetite for strong drink, it would be as difficult for me to pass a liquor saloon, as for a man whose eyes are tempted by a magnificent display of mirrors and bottles. I have often been made aware of open cellar doors, by a damp, musty smell that commonly proceeds from underground rooms, and have, I think, been saved from falling by this odd warning. I should have fallen how-

ever, only a few days ago, into one of these yawning horrors, had it not been for my ever watchful wife who was providentially near, and called to me in time to save me from injury. Some workmen were laying a patch of sidewalk on Main street, in the town in which I reside, and had opened a cellarway near which some of them were at work but did not warn me, doubtless because they did not see me, for workmen are always very kind to me.

I am guided and governed more by the ear, however, than by either of the other organs of sense. If I wish to cross the street, it tells me when teams are coming, how far they are away, at what rate of speed they are traveling, and when it will be safe to cross. If I find a group of men conversing, it tells me who they are. If I wish to enter a store or any place, it tells me where the door is, if open, by the sounds that issue therefrom; but in this I have sometimes been misled, by going to an open window, which always makes me feel awkward. Sound to me is as important as light is to the seeing, and brings to the mind a great many facts that are gathered through the eye when sight is made the prime sense.

Much of my information, however, is received through the fingers. They are properly the organs of

touch; although this sense is distributed over the whole body, even to the mucous membrane that lines the mouth and covers the tongue. When the fingers' ends have been hardened by labor, or from any cause, the lips and tongue are the most sensitive, and are often used in threading needles, stringing beads, etc.,—very innocent uses surely to put the tongue to. This sense of touch is of *necessity* cultivated by the blind, until it often reaches a state of perfection seldom if ever found in the seeing. Of course its development is gradual, as is the growth of all the faculties. When I was quite a little child, and my fingers were soft, I could readily distinguish all the varieties of flowers that grew in my sister's flower garden, and could call them by name. From touch I knew all the common fruits, from the peach with its velvet skin, to the strawberry in the meadow, for which I used to search diligently with my fingers, and sometimes find, as I well remember, thistles, which were never quite to my taste. One thing among my childish sports and amusements, (for they were limited), always gave great pleasure, and does even now. I loved to play along the brook or lake shore, to feel for smooth and odd shaped stones, for pretty shells, &c. Their beauty to me existed only in the great variety of shapes they presented, and in their smooth, pearly sur-

faces, as they never suggested to my mind any idea of color. Winter afforded me few opportunities for cultivating my love for the beautiful. Summer was my heaven with its singing birds, its tinkling brooks, and its fresh and delicious fruits. I took great pleasure in examining with my fingers flowers, leaves and grasses, because their great variety of shape and texture, fed an innate longing after something that I could not then comprehend. When but an infant, I am told, nothing amused me so well as a branch of green leaves. My early boyhood was spent in rambling through the woods, hunting nuts, squirrels, chipmunks, &c., with other boys of my own age; in climbing trees, digging for woodchucks, skating, coasting, and in performing all the feats common to boyhood, such as standing on my head, hopping, jumping, whistling, shouting, &c. I shall regret to have this page come under the eyes of my boys, for in noisy mischief they already exceed my most sanguine expectations, and need not a record of their father's boisterous childhood to encourage them.

This kind of life, however, had fitted me to enter upon a systematic and thorough course of study, which I did at the age of sixteen. I was received as a pupil of the New York Institution for the blind, in 1844. I entered in a good healthy condition of body and mind. Found

there boys and girls like myself without sight, yet earnestly engaged in pursuing the various branches of English education. Many of them were like myself full of life, fond of fun and mischief. Many laughable incidents and anecdotes characteristic of such an institution are fresh in my memory, which I should be pleased to relate, did they illustrate the subject in hand. Here I found sight, which I had always supposed so necessary, somewhat at a discount. I discovered that books, slates, maps, globes, diagrams, &c., could be seen through the fingers, and that children could learn quite as rapidly in this way as with sight. I was not long either in discovering that the older pupils and graduates were intelligent, accomplished and refined; that they were treated more as equals by the officers, and that they were trotted out to show off the merits of the Institution, while we young blockheads were kept in the background. This I think did much toward inspiring me with ambition. My progress at first was slow, having to learn how to use the appliances. My fingers must be trained, my memory disciplined, and my habits of inattention corrected. No effort was made, however, to take the mirthfulness out of me, and I doubt if anything could have succeeded in this. My first introduction to tangible literature, was in placing my hand on a

page of the Old Testament in embossed print. At first I could feel nothing like letters, or any regular characters; only a roughness as though the paper had been badly wrinkled. A card was then placed in my hand, on which the alphabet was printed in very large type, and my attention called to each letter. My fingers, then soft and supple, were not long in tracing the outlines of each character, and my memory being naturally retentive, I was soon able to distinguish each letter and give its name, as my finger was placed on it. Another card was then given me in smaller type, which I mastered in the same way; and so on till I could read our smallest print.

I have been thus minute in describing the rudimentary process of finger training, that my little readers may understand how it is possible for the fingers to be made useful to the blind. To show how quick is the perception through this avenue to the mind, it should be known that we cannot feel a whole word at once, but a single letter. And yet some of us are able to read more than a hundred words per minute, and to trace on raised maps, boundary lines, rivers, mountain chains, lakes, straits, gulfs, bays, to find the location of towns, islands, &c. It would seem that the fingers are capable of grasping almost everything that the eye embraces,

though of course more slowly; and from the wonderful acuteness of which they are susceptible has grown the popular impression that the blind can feel colors. I have been asked this question many thousand times, and have invariably replied that we can no more feel colors than the deaf can see sounds, or the dumb sing psalms. I am aware that it is stated by some eminent writers that the sense of touch in some persons has reached this perfection, but I have many reasons to doubt it. I have no personal object in contradicting this statement, other than to correct a popular error. Should be glad if it were true. It has been accounted for by scientific men upon this hypothesis: that colors differ in temperature; that red is warmer than yellow, and yellow warmer than green, and so on through the spectrum. That violet is a cold color, as its rays are less refracted; that these differences are appreciable to delicate fingers. I have tried many experiments both with my own fingers, and with persons at our several institutions, who like myself were born without sight, and have never yet found one who could form the faintest idea of colors, from impressions received through the fingers. Indeed there is nothing in tangible qualities that suggests color, except differences in texture. We may feel that a piece of broadcloth has a harsh texture, and call it black; or a soft

texture and call it drab or brown. In this we may guess right, for it is only a guess, after all. Wool buyers and dealers in cloth judge frequently of their qualities by touch; and it is true that we who are without sight, come to be very expert in judging the quality of cloths, furs, &c. But to one who has never seen light, there is no suggestion of color through finger perception.

Between sound and color there is a much closer analogy traceable, as both are the result of vibration. The same language is used to express the qualities of each. We talk of harmony in sounds, and harmony in colors; of lights and shades, of chromatics, blending, softness, sweetness, harshness, high, low, bright, dull, &c. May not a grand anthem or chorus be to the mind of one who has never seen light, what a fine picture is to one who has never heard sounds? I should not be surprised to hear that some blind Yankee or Frenchman has invented a telephone, through which he can hear in the rippling brooks and bubbling fountains, the color of their waters; in the songs of birds, the gorgeous tints of their plumage; and in the distant roar of Niagara, the mighty grandeur of its scenery. To an imaginative mind, a well tuned, well voiced organ, may be made to represent all the colors of the rainbow, from the faintest

violet of the piccolo, to the darkest crimson of the sub-bass. Some blind person on being asked what he supposed red to be like, answered, "Like the sound of a trumpet." He might also have said, "Like a flame of fire." I once asked a blind boy, who had never seen light, if he could imagine a house on fire, and how he supposed it would look. He answered, "If it was a big fire it would look like a thousand trumpets all blowing in a different key." I then asked him what a picture is like. "Like anything in shape you may wish to paint," he said, "but in color, (if it is a fine picture), like one of Mozart's grand symphonies." I have many times asked my blind lady friends how they knew in what way to arrange their colors so as to make their fancy work look tasty and attractive. How they knew what colors blended, and what were discordant; and I have often received this answer: "By associating the names of the seven primary colors with the seven sounds of the diatonic scale, placing red as No. 1, or key note, orange next, yellow next, then green, and so on to violet. Thus, red will not blend with orange, being the first and second of the scale, but red and yellow harmonize better, being thirds in the scale; red and green still better, and so on to red and deep violet, which are sevenths in the scale and do not harmonize. Thus we get the tetra-

chord, red, yellow, blue and violet, which may be represented by the flat seventh of the chord C." But I leave this theory for some one to elaborate or refute, who has seen color, and return to my Institution life.

The ear and voice are also trained at these schools for the blind, and music is made one of the chief arts. Piano tuning is also taught in a practical way. If this business is not taught in all the Institutions, it ought to be, for it comes fairly within the scope of our capabilities. And I will here say for the benefit of my brothers in the dark, that I have been very successful as a piano tuner, and the business is a practical one for the blind. Any one with a good ear may learn to tune well, but no one should undertake to repair so delicate a piece of machinery as a piano action, without long experience, mechanical ingenuity, great caution, and good judgment, having had opportunity to acquire the requisite skill. It was not my intention at the outset to write a sketch of my own life, but to demonstrate by my own experience that the inferior senses may be made to perform many of the offices of sight. The eye has some functions, however, which the ears and fingers cannot perform. For example, if a piece of silk or woolen goods be handed me for examination, the nerves of my fingers will tell me whether it is fine or coarse, whether

it has a harsh or soft texture, whether it is highly finished or rough and uneven; but they bring me no intelligence of color. I may pronounce the goods beautiful, because I find in it certain qualities that address themselves to my taste, but it is not beauty addressed to the eye. Light and color, to one who has never seen, is as inconceivable, as music to the deaf. We may get some faint idea of what light is as a medium of communication, or why color pleases the eye, as qualities of texture please the touch; but the conception is vague and unsatisfactory.

I have often had the remark made to me, "Well, if you have never seen, it is not so bad after all; you have less desire to see." This I think is a mistake and a poor consolation. Has the man who has never visited the great Niagara cataract, but has many times heard and read of its wonders, less desire to see it than one who has witnessed those grand displays of God's power in the flood? Has the boy who loves to read of travels and strange adventures less desire to see the glaciers of the Alps, the skies of Italy, or the jungles of Southern Africa, than the traveler who described them? However well we may see with our mental vision, however well suited to our taste may be our surroundings, however pleasant may be our family relations, and however

kind may be our companions, we can not help that irrepressible desire to know what there is about light and color, about the indescribable beauty of a sunset, the splendor of an evening sky, the glory of a cloudless day, and the awful grandeur of a storm. There is yet one thing we greatly desire to know, which the fingers can not grasp. We are told in poetry and romance that the human face divine is an index of the spirit. That its ever changing lines express every mood of the mind, and every emotion of the soul, from a smile of ineffable beauty to a midnight frown; from the sunshine of hope, and joy, and gladness, to clouds of wrath and hatred. That the spirit looks out through the eye and melts you with a beam of tenderness, or pierces your heart with a flash of electric love, or charms you by revealing in its crystal depths the pearl of purity, or transfixes you with a glance of displeasure. Is all this talk about sunlit faces and starlit eyes, fine sentiment only, or does the face really express feeling as unmistakably as we hear it in voices? To show that the deaf have as great a desire to hear the music of the human voice as we to see the language of the face, I quote from Dr Kitto the following touching passage of personal history:

"Is there anything on earth so engaging to a parent, as to catch the first lispings of his infant's tongue, or so

interesting as to listen to its dear prattle, and trace its gradual mastery of speech? If there be any one thing arising out of my condition, which more than another fills my heart with grief, it is THIS: it is to *see* their blessed lips in motion, and to *hear* them not; and to witness others moved to smiles and kisses by the sweet peculiarities of infantile speech which are incommunicable to me, and which pass by me like the idle wind."

Although there are but few experiences in common between the deaf and the blind, I am able to sympathize fully with this eminent deaf author, in the intense desire he felt to hear the sweet voices of his children. There is no other object this side of heaven I so ardently wish to see, as the faces of my family. A feeling sometimes comes over me, akin, I fancy, to the impotent rage of a caged lion, who vainly tries to break his prison bars and gain his liberty. The moral certainty that I must finally leave this world of beauty, without having enjoyed many of its highest blessings and purest delights, often so oppresses me that I can only find relief in prayer, for grace to say, "Thy will be done, O God." I hear the merry voices of my children, know their step, figure, contour of their heads and faces, and in my day-dreams I see them around me full of life and health, fun and frolic, and I know their little hearts are full of love for

me; I know, too, God has given them to me as some compensation for other blessings he has withheld. Let me trust then in his great mercy, that in the far future I may see the faces of my dear ones in the light of eternity; of her who gave me birth, but whose fond look of affection and yearning tenderness, I was never able to return; and the face of her who is now to me even more than a mother, who helps me to bear my many burdens with Christian patience and fidelity. Then if I am permitted to behold the glorified face of Him who hath redeemed us, I shall rejoice that I have lived and suffered, and wept and prayed, that I might dwell with Him forever.

GATHERING SHELLS.

A HAPPY child roamed by the sea-side,
Her hands full of beautiful shells;
She had gathered them out of the blue tide,
Where the spirit of mystery dwells.
She laughed with the rippling waters,
She danced on the pebbly shore,
But vanished like all of Earth's daughters,—
I never have seen her more.

A youth, next to find ocean's treasures,
Came wistfully wandering that way;
He knew not that Earth's fleeting pleasures
Were born but to last for a day.
He gathered bright shells and smooth pebbles,
And many he purposed to keep,
But soon found his treasures but troubles,
And threw them all back in the deep.

An aged man tottering and feeble,
Came wearily next on the strand;
He searched not for shells or smooth pebbles,
But for jewels and gold in the sand.
What he found must remain a sad mystery;
He carried no jewels away,—
The ocean had closed his life's history,
The tide gave him up the next day.

We are gathering shells on the sea shore,
On the boundless ocean of time;
We hear the sad surf on the beach roar
With warning prophetic,—sublime.
We are gathering pearls for adorning,
That sparkle but for a day;
That melt like the dews of the morning,—
We carry no jewels away.

Are we gathering gems of true beauty,
To ornament mind and soul?
Are we gathering diamonds of duty
To last while ages shall roll?
Are we gathering pearls for the Master
Like the pearl of great price he paid?
The tide rises faster and faster,—
Soon the treasures of earth shall fade.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

IT MAY NOT be a correct thing for me to say, but I shall say it nevertheless, that some of the brightest thoughts that illumine the pages of classic literature are emanations from minds entirely shut in from the light of day. You cannot imprison the active mind any more than you can extinguish an active volcano. It will find outlets in some direction. It is always pleasant and profitable to watch the growth and development of intellect under the most favorable circumstances; but to study the manifestations of mind when some of its avenues of communication with the outer world are closed, is much more interesting and instructive. There is no condition of life so destitute of resources, that it may not be improved, and even made productive of positive blessings and comforts.

The case of Laura Bridgman, the blind and deaf mute who is so justly celebrated for her wonderful achievements under difficulties, shows that intellect will shine, though surrounded by impenetrable darkness; that the soul may learn of God and heaven, though wrapped in

unbroken silence; that the heart may be made to rejoice not only in the innocent pleasures of this life, but in the hope of a life to come, in a world of light and song, though it find this world a voiceless solitude. I may be pardoned, therefore, if I copy a few of the leading incidents of the life of this wonderful woman. The public should not lose sight of a character so remarkable. Her memory should not be lost in the debris of time. Her name and achievements, with that of her noble teacher, Dr. Howe, and the process by which he educated her, should be handed down to the latest generation.

"Laura Bridgman was born at Hanover, in New Hampshire, in December, 1829. She is described as having been a very sprightly and pretty infant, with bright blue eyes. She was, however, so puny and feeble until she was a year and a half old, that her parents hardly hoped to rear her. She was subject to severe fits, which seemed to rack her frame almost beyond the power of endurance, and life appeared to be held by a very feeble tenure. But when a year and a half old her dangerous symptoms subsided; and at twenty months old she was perfectly well. Then her mental powers, hitherto stinted in their growth, rapidly developed; and during the four months of health which she enjoyed, she

appears to have displayed a considerable degree of intelligence. But suddenly she sickened again. Her disease raged with great violence during five weeks, when her eyes and ears were inflamed, suppurated, and their contents were discharged. But although sight and hearing were thus gone forever, the poor child's sufferings were not yet ended. The fever raged during seven weeks. For five months she was kept in bed in a darkened room. It was a year before she could walk unsupported, and two years before she could sit up all day. It was then observed that her sense of smell was almost entirely destroyed, and subsequently, that her taste was much blunted. It was not until four years of age that the child's bodily health was restored, and she was able to enter upon the apprenticeship of life and the world.

"'But what a situation was hers!' says Dr. Howe. 'The darkness and silence of the tomb were around her: no mother's smile called forth her answering smile, no father's voice taught her to imitate his sounds: they, brothers and sisters were but forms of matter which resisted her touch, but which differed not from the furniture, save in warmth and in the power of locomotion; and not even in these respects from the dog and the cat.'

"But the immortal spirit which had been implanted

within her could not die, nor be maimed, nor mutilated; and though most of its avenues of communication with the world were cut off, it began to manifest itself through the others. As soon as she could walk, she began to explore the room, and then the house. She became familiar with the form, density, weight, and heat of every article she could lay her hands on. She followed her mother, and felt her hands and arms as she was occupied about the house; and her disposition to imitate led her to repeat everything herself. She even learned to sew a little and to knit.

"Dr. Howe was first made acquainted with the case of Laura in 1837, when she was nearly eight years of age. He found her with a well formed figure; a strongly-marked nervous-sanguine temperament; a large and beautifully-shaped head; and the whole system in healthy action. The parents were easily prevailed upon to allow her to be placed in the Institution for the blind at Boston, to which she was taken in October of the same year. Here the process of her education was at once commenced. In this there was only one of two courses to be taken; either to carry out and perfect the language of signs which she herself had already commenced, or to devise some means of imparting to her a knowledge of the alphabet in common use. Dr. Howe wisely decided to try the latter.

"The first experiments were made by taking articles with which she was familiar, such as knives, forks, spoons, keys, &c., and pasting upon them labels with their names printed in raised letters. These she felt carefully, and soon, of course, discovered that the crooked lines '*spoon*' differed as much from the crooked lines '*key*' as the spoon differed from the key in form.

"Then small detached labels, with the words printed on them were put into her hands; and she soon observed that they were similar to those pasted upon the articles. She showed her perception of this similarity by laying the label '*key*' upon the key, and the label '*spoon*' upon the spoon; and she was encouraged to persevere in such discoveries by the natural sign of patting her head. The same process was then repeated with all the articles she could handle; and she very easily learned to put the proper labels upon them. It was evident, however, that the only intellectual exercise was that of imitation and memory. She recollected that the label '*book*' was placed upon a book, and she repeated the process first from imitation, next from memory, but apparently without any discovery of the relation between the name and thing.

"After a while, instead of labels, the separate letters were given to her on detached bits of paper; they were

arranged side by side, so as to spell *book*, *key*, &c.; then they were mixed up in a heap and a sign was made for her to arrange them herself, so as to express the word *book*, *key*, &c., and she did so.

"Up to this point the process had been merely mechanical, not differing materially from that under which a knowing dog may be taught a variety of tricks. The poor child had sat in mute amazement, and patiently imitated everything her teacher did. But now the truth began to flash upon her; her intellect began to work; she perceived that there was a way by which she could herself make up a sign of anything that was in her mind; it was no longer a dog or a parrot; it was an immortal spirit, eagerly seizing upon a new link of union with other spirits. 'I could almost fix upon the moment,' said her teacher, 'when this truth dawned upon her mind, and spread its light to her countenance; I saw that the great obstacle was overcome; and that henceforward nothing but patient and persevering, but plain and straightforward efforts were to be used.'

"The result thus quickly related, was not obtained until some weeks of apparently unprofitable labor had been expended in following out the sound principle on which it was commenced. A set of metal types was procured, with the letters of the alphabet cast upon their

ends; and also a board, provided with square holes in which she could set the types, so that the letters on their ends could alone be felt above the surface. By this means, when any article was presented to her, she could select the letters which formed its name, and arrange them on her board.

"She was exercised for several weeks in this way, until her vocabulary became extensive; and then the important step was taken of teaching her how to represent the different letters by the position of her fingers, instead of the cumbrous apparatus of the board and types. She accomplished her task speedily and easily, for her intellect had then begun to work in aid of her teacher, and her progress was rapid."

The first report of her case, issued when she had been about three months under instruction, states that she had then just learned the manual alphabet as used by the deaf-mutes; and that it was a subject of delight and wonder to see how rapidly, correctly, and eagerly she proceeded with her labors. The process is thus described:—"Her teacher gives her a new object, for instance a pencil, first lets her examine it, and get an idea of its use; then teaches her how to spell it by making the signs for the letters with her own fingers: the child grasps her hand, and feels her fingers as the

different letters are formed; she turns her head a little on one side, like a person listening closely; her lips are apart; she seems scarcely to breathe, and her countenance, at first anxious, gradually changes to a smile, as she comprehends the lesson. She then holds up her tiny fingers, and spells the word in the manual alphabet; next, she takes her types and arranges her letters; and last, to make sure that she is right, she takes the whole of the types composing the word, and places them upon, or in contact with, the pencil, or whatever the object may be."

It may be doubted by some if the progress here described was possible in so short a time and in the face of such difficulties. But it should be remembered that Laura had little to distract her thoughts or attract her attention in other directions. Her intellect was new and bright, her memory retentive, and her fingers soft and delicate. The whole force of her mind was therefore concentrated upon the single object of learning this new method of communicating with the world about her. It must have all seemed very wonderful to her, and the friends who were thus trying to feed her hungry mind, were doubtless very dear to her. It is much to be regretted that she has never given her own account of her life and experiences. At the end of the succeeding

year another report was issued, which contains the following passages:

"It has been ascertained beyond the possibility of a doubt, that she cannot see a ray of light, cannot hear the least sound, and never exercises the sense of smell, if she have any. Thus her mind dwells in darkness and stillness, as profound as that of a closed tomb at midnight. Of beautiful sights, and sweet sounds, and pleasant odors she has no conception; yet she seems as happy and playful as a bird or a lamb; and the employment of her intellectual faculties, or the acquirement of a new idea, gives her a vivid pleasure, which is plainly marked on her expressive features. She never seems to repine, but has all the buoyancy and gaiety of childhood. She is fond of fun and frolic; and, when playing with the rest of the children, her shrill laugh sounds loudest of the group.

"When left alone she seems very happy if she have her knitting or sewing, and will busy herself for hours: if she have no occupation, she evidently amuses herself by imaginary dialogues or by recalling past impressions; she counts with her fingers, or spells out names of things which she has lately learned in the manual alphabet of the deaf-mutes. In this lonely self communion she seems to reason, reflect, and argue: if she spell a

word wrong with her right hand, she instantly strikes it with her left, as her teacher does, in sign of disapprobation; if right, then she pats herself upon the head and looks pleased. She sometimes purposely spells a word wrong with the left hand, looks roguish for a moment, laughs, and then with the right hand strikes the left as if to correct it.

"During the year she has attained great dexterity in the use of the manual alphabet; and she spells out words and sentences so fast and so deftly that only those accustomed to this language can follow with the eye the rapid motion of the fingers.

"But wonderful as is the rapidity with which she writes her thoughts upon the air, still more so is the ease and accuracy with which she reads the words thus written by others; grasping their hands in hers, and following every movement of their fingers as letter after letter conveys their meaning to her mind. It is in this way that she converses with her playmates, and nothing can more forcibly show the power of mind in forcing matter to its purpose, than a meeting between them.

"When Laura is walking through a passage way with her hands spread before her, she knows instantly every one she meets, and passes them with a sign of recognition; but if it be a girl of her own age, and

especially if it be one of her favorites, there is instantly a bright smile of recognition, and a twining of arms, a grasping of hands, and a swift telegraphing upon the tiny fingers, whose rapid evolutions convey the thoughts and feelings from the outposts of one mind to those of the other. There are questions and answers, exchanges of joy or sorrow, there are kissings and partings, just as between little children with all their senses.

"It is a curious fact, and one in a philosophical point of view most important, as displaying the natural tendency to make language the vehicle of thought, that when she supposes herself alone, she often *soliloquizes* in the finger language. It might at the first view appear doubtful whether she might not be repeating some lesson or exercise: but the fact that she *thinks* on her fingers is placed beyond question by the extraordinary circumstance that she uses the finger language in her dreams; and it has been ascertained that when her slumber is broken and much disturbed by dreams, she expresses her thoughts in an irregular and confused manner on her fingers, just as we should mutter and murmur them indistinctly in our dreams."

After Laura had been eighteen months in the Institution she was visited for the first time by her mother. The touching account of this meeting, as given in one

of the Institution reports, I will here copy as it exhibits some interesting phases of Laura's character.

"The mother stood some time gazing with overflowing eyes upon her unfortunate child, who, all unconscious of her presence, was playing about the room. Presently Laura ran against her, and at once began feeling of her hands, examining her dress, and trying to find out if she knew her; but not succeeding in this, she turned away as from a stranger, and the poor woman could not conceal the pang she felt that her beloved child did not know her.

"She then gave Laura a string of beads which she used to wear at home, which were recognized by her at once, who with much joy put them around her neck, and sought me eagerly to say she understood the string was from home. The mother now tried to caress her, but poor Laura repelled her, preferring to be with her acquaintances. Another article from home was now given her, and she began to look much interested; she examined the stranger much more closely, and gave me to understand that she knew she came from Hanover; she even endured her caresses, but would leave her with indifference at the slightest signal. The distress of the mother was now painful to behold; for, although she feared she would not be recognized, the painful reality

of being treated with cold indifference by a darling child was too much for a woman's nature to bear.

"After a while, on the mother taking hold of her again, a vague idea seemed to flit across Laura's mind, that this could not be a stranger; she therefore felt her hands very eagerly, while her countenance assumed an expression of intense interest; she became very pale, and then suddenly red; hope seemed struggling with doubt and anxiety, and never were contending emotions more strongly depicted on the human face; at this moment of painful uncertainty, the mother drew her close to her side, and kissed her fondly, when at once the truth flashed upon the child, and all mistrust and anxiety disappeared from her face, as with an expression of exceeding joy she eagerly nestled to the bosom of her parent, and yielded to her fond embraces.

"After this the beads were all unheeded; the playthings which were offered her were utterly disregarded; her playmates, for whom but a moment before she gladly left the stranger, now vainly strove to pull her from her mother; aud though she yielded her usual instantaneous obedience to any signal to follow me, it was evidently with painful reluctance. She clung close to me as if bewildered and fearful; and when, after a

moment, I took her to her mother, she sprang to her arms and clung to her with eager joy.

"The subsequent parting between them showed alike the affection, the intelligence, and the resolution of the child. Laura accompanied her mother to the door, clinging close to her all the way, until they arrived at the threshold, where she paused, and felt around to ascertain who was near her. Perceiving the matron, of whom she is very fond, she grasped her with one hand, holding on convulsively to her mother with the other; and thus she stood for a moment; then she dropped her mother's hand, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and turning round, clung sobbing to the matron; while her mother departed with emotions as deep as those of the child."

From Laura's final recognition of her mother, some may infer that she retained some impressions of her babyhood, that some rays of light and echoes of sound may be still lingering in her mind. But in view of the statements made to me by many persons who lost their sight in early childhood, that no impressions of light and color remain in after years, I am forced to this conclusion by the circumstance of Laura's meeting with her mother: that the pure sunlight which beamed in upon her infant soul, faded into midnight darkness, and

the sweet lullaby of her mother's voice no longer echoes in the chambers of her memory.

The success that crowned the efforts thus made to cultivate a mind so completely shut in from all surrounding objects, demonstrates some of the propositions made at the commencement of this article, and shows that few minds are so hampered and imprisoned by imperfect organism, that some thoughts of God and his beautiful creations may not reach them. By analyzing my own conceptions of the material world, I know that thoughts and ideas take form, if not color, in the mind of those who have never seen nor heard. I can think of a horse, dog, cat, or any animal which I have had the privilege of examining with my fingers, and—what will seem strange to my readers—I can think of them without color. That is, I can picture to my mind any object with which I am familiar, of the shape, size, texture, or any quality appreciable to the sense of touch, without giving the mental picture any color; and what has always been perfectly unaccountable to me is, these pictures seem to be printed on my eyelids rather than formed far back in the mind. This is not purely imaginary as some may suppose. The brain has the power of locating impressions, and does so with unerring certainty when the nerves are intact; but if severed it still

refers to their termination. If the stub of an amputated arm be pierced with a pin, the pain seems to be felt in the hand or fingers, just where the nerves had terminated before they were severed. I have often heard people who had lost a leg, complain of pain in their toes, or of an itching in the sole of their foot, and vainly tried to find relief from this disagreeable sensation by scratching an artificial foot. The province of the eye is to see, and if it fail from any cause to perform its functions, the mind still refers to the retina as the location where images should be formed. It has no doubt been observed that blind persons always turn their faces toward any object toward which their attention is called. This is not from force of habit,—for those who have never seen do the same,—but because the mind refers to the eye for impressions. If there is no truth in this hypothesis then the fact above mentioned is still unaccountable.

If I am told that a horse is black I at once associate with his figure some property of night, and if I am permitted to feel him, and find his coat smooth and glossy, my presumption is that it shines. I suppose this idea of shining I have received from a slight perception of light which I have always enjoyed. How any one who has always been surrounded by total darkness can get any impression of shining, or beaming, or shimmering,

or sparkling, or scintillating, is more than I can comprehend. If I am told that a horse is gray, there comes to my mind a vague impression of twilight,—half light and half darkness, or a mixture of white and black, and so on through all the shades of color. But in my ideal world these imaginary colors are secondary, and may be called up at will or banished at pleasure.

If a rubber ball be placed in my hand, I at once recognize its globular form, and call it a ball, but my mind does not necessarily endow it with color. I can think of it as black, or white, or red, or of its shape without color. This you who enjoy perfect sight cannot do. If my reader wishes to experiment upon this phase of mental philosophy, let him imagine a vase of flowers on a table before him. First, let him think of the porcelain vase with its smooth glassy surface and its rude representation of vines and leaves in green and gilt. Second, imagine in this vase a well arranged bouquet, with fine green leaves for a background, then delicate flowers of every shade from snowy white to darkest red. Now let him try to think of this thing of beauty without color; of the vase with its smooth, polished surface, its graceful form, its vines and leaves; and then of the bouquet, with its soft delicate leaves, its tuberoses, its geraniums, verbenas, hyacinths, pansies, mignonette, forget-

me-nots, fuschias, carnations, &c., with a fragrance peculiar to each. This is the way fancy presents such an object to us who have never seen colors. How meagre then, you will say, must be the blind man's conception of beauty. But you forget that the impressions he receives through his fingers, his smell, his taste, his hearing, &c., are greatly intensified. Therefore it would not be fair to infer that his natural descriptions of the beautiful are only imitations; and that his language, often so well chosen and felicitous, is to him but a musical cadence.

I come now to speak of the dream-life or sleep of the blind. There is perhaps no essential difference between the slumbers of the blind and the seeing, except the workings of the mind, or the involuntary exercise of fantasy or imagination. The same comfortable feeling of drowsiness comes over us; sounds and objects seem to recede; there is a confusion of ideas and images; the eyelids droop, the powers of voluntary motion are suspended; the avenues of sense are closed; and sleep is profound, but not always dreamless. The living, thinking principle is ever awake; and although we are not always conscious of its operations, it is doubtless as busy when we are asleep, as when we are awake, in reproducing images, new combinations of thought, and

in echoing voices and sounds long since forgotten. This wakeful, thinking power cannot, however, be the immortal principle or spirit of man, for the lower animals seem to dream.

Sleep is at all times mysterious and awe-inspiring. It is the nearest approach to death of any healthful condition; but it is doubtless nature's opportunity for replenishing exhausted energies. I never hear the slow, regular respirations of a sleeping enemy without feeling ready to forgive all past offenses unless he snore, then my animosity returns.

How little different must have been the real life from the dream life of Laura Bridgman. But one avenue of sense to be closed, the bodily powers suspended, and she is asleep. And what may we suppose her dreams to be? Very much like her thoughts and imaginations while awake. She thinks of her companions and friends, of congratulations or reproofs, of receiving and communicating thoughts and ideas through finger signs, of tender and loving embraces, of joyful meetings, sorrowful partings, and in short all her little routine of daily duties. To her, day and night, sleeping and waking, would be all the same, were it not for the warm sunshine of the day, and the cool damp air at night; were it not that the mind, when the faculties are awake

is able to measure time; that food is supplied through the day and not at night; that the hands in coming in contact with familiar objects, assure the mind that the body is awake, and in possession of its powers of motion; were it not that the heart is assured by expressions of love and sympathy, that life is real.

We who find all our organs of sense in a state of perfection except that of sight, experience greater differences between day and night, sleeping and waking. Noises help greatly to assure the mind that the faculties are awake. The dreams of persons born without sight, differ essentially from the dreams of those who have once seen, in this particular: we who have never seen colors never dream of them; nor of faces, nor of any object at a distance as it appears to the eye. We dream of touching or handling familiar objects, of hearing the voices of friends, and other familiar sounds; of music, of the noise of passing carriages, of footsteps, and of all the sounds by which we are guided when awake.

It has been said by some writers on mental philosophy, that sounds are never heard in dreams; but this is not true. I frequently dream of music when no sounds disturb the stillness of the night, and I often dream of meeting with friends of long ago, of hearing their voices, of talking with them, and of being introduced to

ladies and gentlemen with whom I have never met. Having myself a faint perception of light, my days are not dark, neither are my dreams. At times they are very vivid and distinct. Those of our class who have lost their sight late in life live it over again in their dreams. Memory calls up scenes and pictures of the past; but what seems sad to record is that these scenes and images, at first so bright, so real and so life-like, gradually fade and after a few years become dim and confused. I have a blind friend, with whom I am very intimate, who lost his sight about thirty years ago. I have frequently questioned him upon this subject. He says his dreams were at first very natural and that soon after losing his sight he enjoyed himself much better asleep than awake. He could then see the faces of old familiar friends and walk in dreamland without a guide, fearing no lamp-posts or open cellar-ways. Of late he says his dreams are mixed and confused. Fantasy seems more inclined to reproduce the experiences of the present. If his work through the day has been repairing his buildings or his fences, the work goes on in his dreams, but he does not see the material he is using. He feels for his hammer, boards and nails as when awake.

I regret that the deaf are not more communicative

about their own thoughts and feelings. That they do not write more and give us clearer glimpses of their inner life and spiritual condition, and what their intuitions are of life beyond the boundaries of time and sense. What do they think of sound? Do colors give them some faint conception of what sounds must be? Do they think a sweet sound is like a soft color, a loud sound like a harsh color, a brilliant sound like a brilliant color, and a low, grave sound, like a dark or somber color? What do they think of voices? Do they think a white man's voice is white, and a black man's voice black? That the bark of a yellow dog must be yellow, and the song of a red bird, red? That the voices of the sea and sky are blue, and that the moon and stars fill the heavens with their sweet melodies, as they make night glorious with their shining lights? This, I may be told, is only idle speculation,—that the deaf are not so visionary,—that their thoughts are more practical. Well, let them write more, and tell us what they think. Reticence is not excusable even in the deaf. Surely, the unbroken silence that ingulfs them is as favorable to cogitation, as the darkness that surrounds us is for reflection. "The proper study of mankind is man," says Pope. Surely, there can not be a more interesting

study, than the development of the powers of body and mind under difficulties.

If the few facts and suggestions I have here presented shall start in the mind of any of my readers trains of profitable reflection,—if they prove instrumental in leading any one to a closer investigation of the laws which govern mind,—if they show that there are but few conditions of life without hope,—if they teach cheerfulness and submission to those who are inclined to quarrel with providence,—finally, if they help the world in any way, I shall feel rewarded for this effort; and I trust that my thoughts in the night will not be lost in the darkness.

THE DESERTED CHAPEL.

In the old deserted chapel on the Square,
Where the spirits of the past in silence brooded,
When no sacrilegious sound disturbed the air,
And no burst of boisterous noise the ear intruded;
In the old deserted church I sat alone,
Sadly thinking of the friends of long ago;
Thinking mournfully of spirits who had flown,
And left me still a wanderer here below.

Gloomily I pondered over many years,
Thought of wasted energies, and misspent time,
How with stirring eloquence, and prayers, and tears,
Holy men had here proclaimed the truth sublime.
Even now I seemed to hear them,—faint at first,
Like the echoes of sweet music, soft and low,
Footsteps round the empty altar as of erst,
Spirits with familiar voices come and go.

Hark! they sing in ancient measure, hymns of old;
"Come ye sinners poor and needy, doubt no more;
He hath mercy, He hath pity,—love untold;
From His heart there flows abundant, boundless love."
Now around the altar kneeling, lo! they bow,
Praying, wrestling for a blessing. Will it come?
Tears of penitential sorrow, how they flow!
Mercy hears, and stoops to answer from her home.

Every bleeding heart is healed with heavenly balm,
Every guilty soul is cleansed with Jesus's blood,
Every breast from passion's tumult now is calm,
And each grateful tongue is singing praise to God.
Now with snowy hands they beckon to the throng;
"Come ye sinners poor and needy, doubt no more."
Up the aisles with solemn tread they move along,
And around the altar bow, as those before.

Gradually the vision vanished. All was still.
In the old deserted church I sat alone.
On the buried past and present pondered, till
I wished me with the spirits that had flown.

BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN.

WHO DOES not love the beautiful children,
So bright and so brisk, so merry and free?
That heart must be calloused that cannot receive them,
With all their sweet ways and innocent glee.

So fresh from the hand of the merciful Maker,
That one almost feels that a message they bring,
That still on their tongues divine accents linger,
Sweet wordlings of praise to the heavenly King.

Christ said as he blessed them, of such is the kingdom,
Forbid not the children to come unto me;
His heart though a God's, felt a sympathy for them,
He loved the dear children; and so shall not we?

In our hearts and our homes let us cherish these treasures,
And guard their young lives from temptation and sin;
Let us practice before them the virtues and graces,
And thus here on earth shall our heaven begin.

LITTLE HANDS AND FEET.

Busy little baby feet!
All day long I hear your patter;
Tireless tongues! with nonsense sweet,
Still I hear your ceaseless chatter.
What but muscle, flesh and bone,
Could endure such wasteful wearing?
Yet how silently goes on
Nature's process of repairing.

Restless little hands and feet!
Never idle, never weary;
Ever supple, deft and fleet,
Always fresh, and blithe, and cheery.
What is home without a baby?
Like a day without a sun:
Light enough to toil, it may be,
But dreary when the toil is done.

Sad the man whose home rejoices
Not in one sweet childish face;
Whose halls resound not with the voices
Of innocence and youthful grace.
Sad the wife whose love is linked not
With the heart by time estranged,
But the cruel cause she thinks not,
Why his love for her is changed.

When shall earth become an Eden
Like the Paradise once lost?
When each mother's life is laden
With the cares she counts not cost;
When each father feels a pleasure
In the work of love bestowed,
To fit each little darling treasure,
For the heritage of God.

THE TURKEY.

INSCRIBED TO C. R. KERN, ESQ., THANKSGIVING DAY, 1876.

Once upon a morning cheery,
While I sat all grim and teary,
Wondering what my frugal deary
Should cook for our Thanksgiving dinner;
While I dwelt on thoughts most shocking,
And drew on our baby's stocking,
Suddenly there came a knocking,
Knocking at our frontal door.
"'Tis a boy," said I, "the sinner,
Knocking at our frontal door,
With a dun, and nothing more."

Ah! distinctly I remember,
'Twas on the thirtieth of November,
A day when every glowing ember
Should roast a goose if nothing more.
But a sad, uncertain feeling
As to Providential dealing,
Chilled me with the thought of stealing
Something for our scanty store,
When again I heard the knocking;
"Wife," said I, "undo the locking,
And open wide our frontal door."

Sure enough, there stood a clerky,
With his face all smiles and smirky,
Holding in his hand a turkey
Fresh from some one's bounteous store.
"Bird of Paradise!" (I meant it,)
"Heaven bestows though you present it!
Tell me! what kind friend hath sent it?"
"Kern," he said, and nothing more.
This one word he spoke and vanished;
And the hungry wolf was banished,
Banished from our frontal door.

And that turkey ever flitting,
Never sitting, still is flitting,
Watching for a comrade fitting,
Ready for our Christmas store,
And the wolf looks out, it may be,
Hungry for a dimpled baby,
Drawing nearer, nearer, may be,
Ready for a savage roar.
And my heart, among the playthings
That lie rolling on the floor,
Hopes and struggles evermore.

PIGS IN THE PULPIT.

In a small country town from this city not far,
The church door one night was left standing ajar;
When what was the people's surprise, the next day,
On entering the chapel to sing and to pray,
To find in the pulpit, asleep on the floor,
Three vagabond porkers,—there might have been more.
And doubtless there had been, if mud is a test
Of the place where tramps have been taking their rest.
As the worshippers entered, the sexton prepared
To open the windows and have the thing aired;
But seeing the porkers asleep on the floor,
He determined to turn out the devils before
The parson should enter, and see how bestained
With mud and with filth, was his pulpit profaned.
With sash-rod in hand, he with vigor began
To stir up the brutes, who immediately ran,
And squealed as they ran out of pew into pew,
While the children all laughed, and the women squealed too.
The men soon discovered that pigs on the race
Were too much for the sexton, so they joined the chase,
And then, what a squealing and racing and kicking:
You'd have thought forty schoolboys were taking a licking,
But some way, the pigs couldn't see their way out;
They tumbled and jumbled and scurried about,

Now hither, now thither, then up the long aisles,
Now backward, now forward, and many the trials
The men made to head them, and drive them before,
And hurry them out of the broad open door.
But pigs have a nature like false pride and sin;
They rarely go out the same way they came in.
At length, a bright thought struck the deacon in season;
He did not take time to reflect or to reason,
But raised a loose board in the floor—the thing needed—
When out popped the pigs, and the meeting proceeded.

LESSON.

Secure your church door against tramps of all ermine;
Be wise and content with your pastor's own sermon;
Leave not the straight gate of your pulpit ajar;
If strangers apply, find out first who they are.
Remember the pigs and their Sabbath day rout;
If the devil gets in, he is hard to get out.
If you have a dull preacher, why try to endure him;
If a better one come, some will try to secure him;
If a poorer one prate, you will feel yourselves bored,
Grow weary and drowsy, and faint, in the Lord.
Very much that we prize in our homes and our nation
Is loved and made sacred by association;
If we open our churches on every occasion,
We no longer persuade, but are dupes of persuasion.

DANGERS OF COURTSHIP.

A CRICKET hopped in at the open door,
And found in the wainscot a chink ;
A mouse tripped out on the oaken floor,
And sat in the corner to think.
The cricket believing herself alone,
Tuned up her lyre to sing,
And then she chirped in her rasping tone,
"Oh! give to my lover a wing."
The mouse was charmed with her amorous song,
And so enchanted was he,
That he crept from his hiding place along,
And gallantly fell on his knee.
" Miss Cricket," he said, " I admire you much,
And fain would make you my wife."
Just then he fell into an enemy's clutch,
Who snapped the thread of his life.
Old Puss lay crouched on his tufted rug,
And saw with flaming eyes
The mouse make love to the bashful bug,
And quickly secured his prize.

MORAL.

Young maidens beware how you hop about ;
And boys stop a moment to think.
The young lady's pa may be looking out,
And snap you as quick as a wink.

"BEAUTIFUL SNOW."

Oh the snow, the beautiful snow;
It flies in your eyes when the cold breezes blow,
It piles in the aisles, along grocery row,
And loads up the roads so the cartmen can't go;
Oh the snow, the redundant snow.

It packs in the tracks and delays all the trains,
It hills up and fills up the alleys and lanes,
It heaps and it sweeps o'er the stubbly plains,
It sprinkles and tinkles the window panes;
Oh the snow, the musical snow.

It drifts through the rifts and the cracks in your doors,
It banks on the planks of your sidewalks and floors,
It shakes and it breaks down the awnings of stores,
It rollicks and frolics, it rattles and roars;
Oh the snow, the exulting snow.

If your roof is bomb-proof it may bear the load;
If Brown gets to town he must shovel the road;
You must scoop from your stoop what last night it snowed,
Or you're plugged in your jug as tight as a toad;
Oh the snow, the abundant snow.

Go out, walk about in the streets if you dare,
It trips on your lips, and sifts through your hair,
It darts till it smarts every cheek that is bare,
And congeals on your heels as you step, so beware!
Or down you go in the treacherous snow.

Of course, if your horse is uncommonly kind,
A rift through the drift he may possibly find;
But he rears up before and kicks up behind,
Till your load from the road to the ditch is consigned,
And over you go in the beautiful snow.

Pretty girls with their curls are there all in a heap,
Shouting boys with their noise from their snow caverns creep,
Laughing eyes with surprise from the window panes peep,
And you say as your sleigh slides over the steep,
Confound the snow! we've got too much snow.

Then hurrah for a thaw when young April looks in,
When rills from the hills with spring showers begin,
And the ice that now lies on the rivers grows thin,
And quakes as it breaks with a horrible din;
Then away must go our beautiful snow.

MISERABLE MUD.

All the forces of nature are prone to extremes;
When 'tis dry then 'tis parched, when it rains then it streams;
When it snows then it piles, when it thaws there's a flood,
And the world is engulfed in a deluge of mud.
Oh the mud, the miserable mud!

It lies on the crossing, it floats in the street,
It spreads on the sidewalk, it sticks to your feet;
It flows through the gutter, the ditch and the sewer,
And bespatters alike the rich and the poor.
Oh the mud, the impartial mud!

It makes no distinction 'twixt broadcloth and shoddy,
'Twixt doeskin and fustian, it daubs everybody;
'Tis spattered by horses, it flies from the wheels,
Till you're plastered with mud from your head to your heels.
Oh the mud, the invincible mud!

By and by when 'tis dry, when you're roasted and fried,
When the ground thirsts for water but rain is denied,
With mercury at ninety and still on the rise,
With dust on your beaver and dust in your eyes,
Oh then you'll sigh for th' cool, plastic mud.

Alas! how we pass from the good to the bad;
'Tis strange how we change from the joyous to sad;
He is wise who can prize the joys of to-day,
And trusting the morrow be willing to say—
We thank Thee, good Lord, for rain, snow or mud.

MISS SUE PREME SELFISH AT HOME.

Miss Selfish sat in her easy chair,
Her lap-dog lay on the tufted rug;
She watched the world with a listless air,
And sipped sangaree from a silver mug.

She glanced at her face in a fine French plate
That hung o'er the marble mantle tree,
And wondered what kept her lover so late;
"He's a laggard in love, I fear," said she.

"'His mother,' he says, 'claims much of his care:'
Bah! that is all stuff, but sounds very fine;
Then a pet of a sister comes in for a share
Of a heart that he promised should all be mine.

"I'll taunt him to-night with his cruel neglect,
His double devotion and service slipshod;
But then he'll reply with his cant, I suspect,
That duty to parents is honor to God.

"Fie! duty to sweetheart is my religion,
Submission to wives should be first in the code,
Saint Paul's stale opinions need some revision,
His doctrine on marriage must soon explode.

"Most men are captious, fickle and vain,
They flirt and they flatter, they fawn and caress,
They are addicted to habits intemperate, profane,
Ever fond of display, fine horses, and dress.

"We women are watchful, and wise in the main,
We are faithful, forgiving, forbearing and kind,
Frail physical forces we balance with brain,
And what's lacking in muscle we make up in mind."

Just then a waiting-maid came to present
The name of a lady—" Home Missions," she thought;
" Go tell her I'm out," said Miss Selfish, " I'm bent
That for this time, at least, I shall not be caught.

" For heathen and paupers, new churches and schools
Not a single day passes without some appeal;
Asylums for soldiers, inebriates and fools;
The world has gone mad with a misguided zeal.

" Of what use are your churches? hypocrisy rules;
Why lavish such wealth on the ignorant and poor,
Why build your asylums and charity schools?
The world would be better without them, I'm sure."

Once more her waiting-maid came to report;
A beggar was asking for clothing and meat;
" Go send him away," was her answer in short,
" Stay, bring me some bits for my poodle to eat.

" Our city is filled with these tireless tramps,
Who beg their living from door to door,
They are all such pilfering, plundering scamps,
That it's nobody's duty to feed them, I'm sure."

"He is young, ma'am, and fair," said the maid with a blush,
"Is willing to work but finds nothing to do."
Her mistress replied with an angry flush,
"Pray send him away, what is that to you?"

"With a family of children," entreated the maid,
"An invalid wife on her scanty bed,
No fuel to warm,—with her rent unpaid,
And four famished little ones crying for bread."

"You'll do for a preacher," said Miss Sue Preme,
"Here's a dime to reward your importunate plea,
Go give it the man, if so much you deem
Him worthy of aid; but for you, not me.

"I always take pleasure in helping the worthy,
I made our rector a large donation,
I always favor the few who serve me,
Who try to maintain a respectable station."

Still once more enters the waiting-maid,
With an open note on a silver tray;
"The thanks of the mendicant, madam," she said,
"I gave him the trifle and sent him away."

" Great heavens! girl, pray what is this?
The name of Bernard, O! what have I done?
A plot to rob me of earthly bliss,
Of a prize that I thought so nearly won.

" I'm overreached, I'm sold, betrayed
By one who enjoyed my confidence.
My love is exchanged for a waiting-maid,
My hate, my anguish is most intense."

SHE READS.

" Charming Sue Preme,
For such I must ever deem
You, beautiful as heartless,—fair as cold.
Thanks for the dime,
It saved me from the crime,
The crime of selling hope of heaven for gold.
And though I wed
Your waiting-maid instead,
I've figured up the profit, counted the cost;
In her I find
A most congenial mind,
A treasure richer than the one I lost.
False one, adieu!
Heap your favors on the few;
Lavish your treasures on the worldly proud;
But close not your door
To the pinched and hungry poor;
An angel may be standing in the crouching crowd."

CELESTIA CHARITY AT HOME.

Miss Charity sat in her sewing chair,
Her work-box stood on a stand hard by;
She was making a shroud for a millionaire,
Gone up to possess his treasures on high.

She saw not her face in the plain gilt glass
That hung o'er the oaken mantle-tree,
Reflecting clearly each modest grace,—
For flattering friends? No! for angels to see.

And thus she wrought at her toilsome task,
From early morning till set of sun;
And repined at her lowly lot, do you ask?
'Twas a labor of love, and most cheerfully done.

Her supple fingers were seldom idle,
Her busy brain was rarely at rest,
Her flow of spirits, even, not tidal,
She trusted in Providence and was blest.

True, solemn thoughts her work suggested,
But her mind was cheerful and her work was light;
Sweet birds among the branches rested,
The sky was fair and the flowers bright.

'Twas a country house, quite humble but sweet,
Selected to suit her lowly station;
A purring cat lay at her feet,
Dreaming, no doubt, of a rat-ification.

No street organ came to torture the soul
With the tune of John Brown, or Yankee Doodle;
No troublesome tramp or gypsy stroll
Frightened the cat or worried the poodle.

'Twas just the place for sonneteer,
A paradise for a sanctum scribbler;
No discords to vex, no callers to fear,
No smiles to waste on a jesting ribbler.

And well Miss Charity loved her home.
Contented and happy she spent her days;
There no contention nor care could come,
But innocent mirth and Godly praise.

She believed in prayer and honest labor,
In faith and zealous works combined;
She loved her Lord and trusted her neighbor,
And with useful books improved her mind.

The sun streamed in at the western door,
And still her weary work went on;
The moon lay white on the ashen floor,
But the burial robe was not yet done.

So she sang and stitched, and stitched and sang,
Till the stars peeped out from their hiding places,
And the night-bird's notes through the orchard rang,
Till the blossoms hid their frightened faces.

The crickets chirped in the scented grass,
The owlet quarreled with the katydid,
The light wind through the leaflets passed,
To find where the sweetest flowers were hid.

A neighbor called for a pleasant chat;
'Twas John, a well-to-do farmer's son.
Miss Charity rose and took his hat,
Gave him a seat, and the work went on.

He talked of his crops and the price of grains;
How corn had gone up and rye had gone down;
He spoke of his hopes, of his prosperous gains,—
Was silent,—and still the stitching went on.

"I have purchased," said he, "the Macklebe farm,
Adjoining my father's place on the west;
The buildings are new, the cottage is warm,
The soil is the richest and very best."

"Now I need me a wife," said farmer John,
"A wife who is frugal, faithful and true,
A love to encourage and help me on
Through life, so darling, I've come for you."

She did not look at her lover's face,
Nor the blushing glass o'er the mantle-tree,
But answered with mild, becoming grace:
"So, farmer John, thee has come for me.

"Thee says thee has purchased many fair acres,
And now, thee needs a wife, did thee say?
And thee has come for a plain little Quakeress;
Why, John, I should give them all away.

"I'll marry thee, though, on one condition,
That half which those broad acres afford,
Shall be set apart with thy permission
And freely given to the work of the Lord."

"Nay, not so much," said the wary farmer,
"But the tenth of all the land produces
I will place in the hands of my little charmer,
To feed the poor, and for Christian uses."

"Not so, not so," the maiden replied,
"I will not let thee cheat the Lord;
When Ananias and Sapphira lied,
Swift judgment was their dire reward."

"I yield, I yield, be it as you say;
I would not lose thee for earth and heaven;
So have your will, and have your way,
All that you ask shall be freely given."

"Enough," she said, "I ask no more,"
And love lit up her queenly brow:
The stars peeped in at the open door,
To see them seal their plighted vow.

PAT AND THE FROGS.

A KNIGHT of the spade and a gin graduator,
Having taken one night too much of the craythér,
Went staggering home by a roundabout way,
And crossing a field where a quagmire lay,
With shillaly in hand he went blundering on,
Till he brought up at last at the edge of a pond.
"Holy mither! what's this?" said our knight of the spade;
"Had I betther go round or thry for to wade?"
"You'd better go round," said a guttural voice.
"Hold yer tongue, ye spalpeen, who axed your advice?"
"Go round, sir, go round," said a voice to the right.
"Come on, thin, ye haythens, I'm ready to fight."
"You'd better go round," said a voice at the left.
"Hould yer gab, or bedad!"—and the night air he cleft.
"Here's a row, here's a row," came in guttural tone.
"Show yer head, and be jabers, I'll break ivery bone."
"Knock him down, knock him down," cried a voice in
the rear.
But just then there fell on his wondering ear,

Such a chorus of voices, that Pat stood amazed,
And dropped the shillaly that he held upraised.
Like the notes of a bagpipe, so shrill and so clear,
Came sounds from the swamp with these words to his ear:

SONG OF THE PEEPERS.

"Pete, Pete, put in your feet!
Never retreat until you are beat.
Sweet, meat, something to eat,
Somebody's feet are in the peet.

"Peep! leap! it's not very steep,
Down in the deep where we peepers keep.
Peep! leap! all in a heap,
But never asleep where the leeches creep!"

"Are ye fairies?" said Pat, "who are spakin' so sweet?
Come over to Tim's and begorra it's my treat;
Or if ye are humans, and mean to be civil,
Come out till we spake, or it's go to the divil;
But if robbers ye are, and a murthering crew,
Then we'll thry what an Irish shillaly can do."
"Hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo," came a voice from the trees,
And Paddy jumped in fully up to his knees.

" So it's laughin' you'd be, you dirty blackguard,
Come out till ye thry if me stick is not hard."
So he struck to the left, and he struck to the right,
Till the owl from the trees flew away in affright.
He slashed and he splashed with such hearty good will,
That soon every peeper and croaker was still.
But being top-heavy with whiskey and gin,
His foot gave a slide and he tumbled right in.
He lunged and he plunged, he floundered and swore,
Till his brogans walked out on the opposite shore.
The leeches peeped out from their holes in the mud,
And begged for a banquet of pure Irish blood.
He was thoroughly soaked both outside and in;
With water outside, and inside with gin.
On taking an invoice, he found that poor Pat
Was out a shillaly, and minus a hat.
Exhausted and sobered, he sat down to think
How the drink in his head got his head in the drink.
What a brute he had been, what a life he had led;
How his children were naked and crying for bread;
How his poor, patient Biddy had borne his abuse,
And tried to reform him but found 'twas no use;
How she'd waited and watched through the long weary
nights,
While he was away in the brothels and fights;

How often she'd found him all bleeding and bruised,
Had bound up his wounds, and his errors excused.
For some time he sat thus sad and dejected,
And on his past life and misdeeds reflected.
At length, he looked up at the stars overhead,
And thus to the Spirit that rules them he said:
" Great Spirit, if through those swate eyes ye can see,
In pity look down on a sinner like me,
And if ye have ears, and can hear what I spake,
Please write down the promise I'm going to make.
So long as my name is Patrick O'Flynn,
I'll drink no more brandy, nor whiskey, nor gin,
I'll be sober, industrious, and truthful, and stiddy,
And never will bate nor abuse my poor Biddy."
How Pat kept his promise, the sequel will show.
He is sober, industrious, and none that we know
Has a happier face, or a pleasanter cot;
But his fight with the frogs he has never forgot.
And now, he is old and can't work any more,
He sits on a bench by his own cottage door,
And tells where the barley and corn shall be grown,
On the fine, fertile farm that is now all his own.
He brings from his garden the mercer and rose,
And the finest of fruit to his neighbor he shows.

He knows which potato is Biddy's delight,
And they often talk o'er the events of that night,
Of his fight with the frogs, of his bath in the slough,
How the stars and the angels recorded the vow,
How whiskey had made him a beggar and beast,
But temperance had crowned him a king and a priest.
And now, when the Master says, "Pat, come up hither,"
He hopes he and Biddy may travel together.

THE HOLE IN THE GATE.

We had a little pig, and he wasn't very big,
He had a peaked nose and curly pate ;
When he slipped through a crack you couldn't drive him back,
For he couldn't see the hole in the gate.

He would raise his furtive eye to an object in the sky,
And run for the entrance very straight,
Then he'd slip along the fence with a squealing most intense,
For he couldn't find the hole in the gate.

When once he had a bite of the melons out of sight,
It didn't take him long to find the bait,
And you couldn't drive him out, with his ugly peaked snout,
For he couldn't see the hole in the gate.

And we have heard of men who were larger pigs, and then,
When they had got inside the crib of state,
You couldn't drive them out with ballot, threat nor gout,
For they couldn't see the hole in the gate.

Most men in this respect, (though I'm sorry to reflect
On the honors and the virtues of the great,)
Have the nature of the swine,—they can see the guineas shine,
But they can't see the hole in the gate.

CHORUS.

So there is no use for any one to wait,
The rats have overrun the crib of state,
When once you're fairly in, to steal is not a sin ;
For money hides the hole in the gate.

CHRONIC GRUMBLER.

We have read of hypochondriacs,
  Somnambulists and catalepsy,
But of all the marvelous mind attacks,
  The direst is brain dyspepsia.

Its symptoms multiform, are legion,
  And difficult of diagnosis ;
Sometimes a mania on religion,
  Next bordering on metempsychosis.

But the saddest form physicians find,
  Is somewhat like a colic rumbling ;
An aberration of the mind
  Called morbia, or chronic grumbling.

As when the gastric organs gig
  And fail to do their chymal duty,
Just so the mind gets out of rig,
  And sees deformity in beauty.

As through a green glass all looks green,
So by disease is man afflicted;
He sees in earth's sublimest scenes,
His own deformity depicted.

The sun puts on a sickly glare,
The moon looks through a dismal halo,
The stars gleam with portentous stare,
The ruddiest face looks dark and sallow.

His social sky is overcast,
His friends are false, his neighbors slight him,
The reason he has found at last;
He's poor and so they don't invite him.

"The moral world is going to wreck,—
How crime of every kind increases;
Some power this tendency must check,
Or heaven and earth will go to pieces.

"But the meanest man in all the land,
Is the shrewd conniving politician;
A whiskey bribe is in one hand,
And in the other a fat commission.

" He buys and sells the freeman's vote,
And worms his way to an honored station ;
He watches the wind and turns his coat,—
By craft and fraud he rules the nation.

" He reaches the presidential chair,
And soon he gains a fortune ; no wonder !
For thieves are here and knaves are there,
All grabbing for the public plunder.

" The public lands are given away,
Money is squandered on corporations,
Government officers double their pay,
To ape in extravagance foreign nations.

" So taxes are up and grains are down,
The rich are made richer, the poor made humbler,
Business is stopped in city and town ;"
And thus croaks on our chronic grumbler.

" The churches too are growing proud,
Too much is spent in ornamenting,
Some brother shouts or prays too loud,
Seats should be free,"—he's opposed to renting.

" Religion goes out as pride comes in,
The people spend too much in dressing ;
Church gambling is a heinous sin,
It never can receive God's blessing.

" The world is sadly out of joint,
He hears a low prophetic rumbling,
The end is near, he sees the point,"
And thus the grumbler keeps on grumbling.

Let all the blessings of earth be given,
Arrange all things to suit his will,
Give him a seat in the highest heaven,
The chronic grumbler will grumble still.

A COMMUNICATION.

SINCE THE preceding pages were put in type, the following pertinent communication has fallen into my hands, which for point, force, and elegance of diction is rarely equaled by seeing writers. No reference is made to it in the table of contents, as that was set up and printed before I decided to introduce this letter; but I find it so fully accords with my own experience, and the spirit of my little book, and so clearly corroborates many of the statements I have previously made in my own behalf, that I feel impelled to reproduce it for the benefit of my readers.

The writer is evidently a man of some culture, of spirit, and of great force of character. He is painfully conscious of his social and physical disabilities and endeavors in a masterly way to set the world right. His allusion to over-officious people who want to be kind but do not know how, and who sometimes mistake a want of sight for deafness, and bawl into our ears with a voice that would have waked Rip Van Winkle from his twenty years slumber, is both forcible and amusing.

I have many times gone into shops and stores to make a purchase or get a job of work done, and have been greatly annoyed by having men shout at me as if I were too deaf to hear common thunder; when the fact is, I can hear better than people can who have their sight. This want of thought on the part of many is greatly to be regretted, as we are sometimes led to think that people are angry with us because they talk so loudly, besides it makes us feel embarrassed and uncomfortable.

Friends, speak to us in your natural tone of voice, and in all respects treat us like seeing men. I may have said something very much like this before, but I wanted to say it again. A truth cannot be too often repeated.

The writer of the following communication is a native of Plymouth, England, and seems to have found the same misapprehension of his condition, and the same social difficulties to contend with that we experience in this country. It may be necessary to premise that this person at the time of losing his sight was learning the trade of cabinet-making, and had reached the age of eighteen years when he was accidentally blinded in the street, by the explosion of some chemical compound, which he was carrying in his hand. This melancholy

accident eventually drove him to music as a resource for pleasure, and employment for livelihood; and after twenty-two years of total blindness, he is said to be an accomplished musician and the proprietor of a music store. The following is his communication:—

"In dealing with the subject of blindness, it is necessary to distinguish two classes of sufferers: the one, such as never saw at all; and the other, such as have been deprived of sight, but had lived a sufficient time in the enjoyment of it for the impressions derived from it to have become fixed upon the mind. The latter is my own case; and, consequently, some of my ideas will be found the same as those of persons who have always been in the enjoyment of their sight.

"The following may be stated as the facts in my own experience, which appear to meet the questions under consideration:

"My first feeling, after recovering from three weeks of burning pain and the effects of stupefying opiates, was that of disappointment, and much grief that my prospects in life were utterly ruined. In a short time more I should have been as well qualified as most others to contend with the world; but the bright hopes of youth and the pleasurable anticipations of manhood now lay blasted before me. I did not, however, rest in

despondency. The novelty of my situation, and my being able to do certain things by the light of my imagination only, which those around me could, in some instances, scarcely accomplish by the aid of sight, proved a great encouragement and an incentive to further exertions. I also soon found some amusement in trying my skill in certain branches of my former occupation; but I found that although I could handle the tools as expertly as ever, I wanted the eye to mark the proper distance between the edge of the instrument and my own fingers. I could plane a piece of board as smoothly as ever; but from the want of that which I had lost, could never succeed in adjusting its proportions with that geometrical accuracy which was essential to a good piece of work. So, finding that this would not do as a permanency, I sought a resource in the ear; and as music can be brought to bear at once upon the ear and upon the pocket, I betook myself to it as a profession, and applied my physical and mental energies with such intensity to the pursuit, that I fell into another error, and obtained a practical demonstration of the fact that two and two do not always make four; for from the severity of my application to my studies, and not allowing myself the needful relaxation, my progress was disproportionate to my bodily strength, which became for

a time much affected by the war it was constrained to keep up with a mind too active and too ardent for it to cope with long.

"I have never found satisfaction or enjoyment in any matter which I am not able to reflect upon, so as to understand it in connection with some of its leading principles, or to be led by it to comprehend more fully some other thing with which I was before but partially acquainted. Even in music, with which I am now entirely surrounded, I can find no pleasure unless I am able to associate with it some idea of an intellectual or social character; but this I can always do, and therefore I am at all times able to derive much enjoyment from it.

"Time never hangs heavily upon my shoulders. I have no idle moments, having constant occupation for the mind, either in the resources of music, or in some other scientific or intellectual pursuit. These, being mental, belong, as you are well aware, to the highest sources of happiness; and other enjoyments are available only so far as they refer back to the mind again. The bustle and noise of crowded streets are agreeable rather than otherwise to me; but only so far as that by this means I become acquainted through the ear with the nature of the pursuits in which my fellow-beings are

engaged. In public assemblies, whether for church, platform, or musical purposes, my recollections of former scenes readily, as though but yesterday visible to the eye, picture forth the whole to the imagination, in all the corresponding circumstances of both the speakers and the auditors.

"I cannot conceive of any shade of difference in any particular, between the ideas of my own mind with reference to external objects, and those of persons who have never experienced the absence of sight; and certainly not between my own present notions and what they would have been had I never been called to endure this privation. In walking abroad amidst the verdure and foliage common to rural scenes, the nature of the one is readily intimated by the foot, and the extent and quality of the other by the gentlest breeze, or perhaps the season of the year is indicated by the still stronger gale, the various notes of the feathered tribes changing with the periods of the year;—all these and many more circumstances contribute to give the outline of the picture, or to furnish the materials from which the imagination can supply a complete landscape, even though the spot may be one altogether new to my experience.

"I am not aware of the possibility of any seeing man ever reading or hearing a description of any place, per-

son, or thing whatever, without as instantaneously forming an image of the same in his mind as though it had been suddenly presented to his outward vision, and as indelibly remaining there as if he had actually seen the original; but the correctness of the figure will only be in proportion to the accuracy of the description, and to the ability of the person to understand it and to associate therewith the characters corresponding to the account received. This power remains when sight is lost. For instance, there is no public character in past or present history with whose name I am familiar, whatever may have been his distinguishing characteristics, but whenever his name is brought to my mind, an ideal image of him invariably accompanies it. So with my most intimate friends; those whom I knew in early life still retain in my mind the aspects under which they then appeared to me; but if it happens that my acquaintance with them has been kept up, they are present to my mind with all the corresponding additional marks of increasing age. I am led to think from these facts, and from the vivid freshness with which ideas of form are impressed upon the mind, whether newly or more remotely created, that there cannot be any material difference between my own impressions and those of one

who has always enjoyed the power of viewing objects by the eye.

"Dreams are to me always replete with images of visible objects. In them I most decidedly *see* every person and thing which then becomes a subject of cognizance; and they appear under the same aspects, and are invested with the same circumstances, as those which my imagination gives to them when I am awake, unless occasionally distorted or changed in the same way that familiar objects are often modified in the dreams of those who see. It is further remarkable that I do not remember to have had, for some years after losing my sight, the slightest consciousness in dreams that I was really in a state of blindness. More recently, my mind has occasionally even in sleep reverted to this fact; but the consciousness has always been accompanied by the delightful feelings of one surprised to find himself suddenly restored to the possession of a treasure which he had lost.

"The sense of touch, like that of hearing, is rendered much more sensitive in the blind than in those who see, from the simple fact of its being kept in constant requisition. It is a part of my profession to regulate and tune musical instruments, and when opening a piano-forte for that purpose, a single sweep of the hand over the sur-

face of the wires enables me to detect the absence of a single string; nor do I find the slightest difficulty in discovering the cause of any derangement in the machinery. I can also tell the time by a watch, nearly enough for all practical purposes; but in this particular I was greatly outmatched by a person with whom I once resided who had never been in possession of sight.

"Touching the very important question as the relative position of the seeing and unseeing man to each other, I do not hesitate to say that all the most painful of the disadvantages with which I have to contend under the absence of sight, have arisen entirely from the former not sufficiently understanding the capabilities and resources of the latter. In dealing with the blind, the person who is in the enjoyment of sight usually falls into one or more of several errors to which he is liable. He shoots too high or too low, too far or too short of the mark, and yet, strange and paradoxical as it may seem, he never fails to hit; and if his victim happens to be one of the sensitive order, he is sure to feel the shaft in his tenderest parts. He is walking in the streets; some one accosts him, and acting upon the principle that those who cannot see cannot hear, he puts his mouth close to his ear, and bawls as though he were speaking to a deaf man. He proceeds a little farther, and some officious

passer-by catches hold of him, and nearly capsizes him in attempting to lift him over some step or other obstacle, which, if left to his own resources, he would have passed with the greatest ease. These things would be trifles did not the class of misconceptions which they indicate, seriously affect the blind man's social position and his prospects in life.

"Suppose, for instance, the case of a blind man, who, by the most persevering application, has fully qualified himself for some important office connected with his profession—say, of music. He hears of an advertisement, and he makes the requisite application, but is told that as he cannot see he cannot play. The next time an opportunity offers, he determines to go in person—say, a hundred miles, and in winter, too—to show that he can play. He performs in public and in private, and shows himself competent to the discharge of all the duties of the employment which he seeks, but the feeling that one who can see is more competent for it than one who cannot, still stands between him and success. He returns, and endeavors to establish himself in his native town. He introduces himself to those who are most likely to advance his interests; he exhibits himself, so to speak, he is approved, he excites some sensation. People cry, 'Wonderful!' they tell him that he plays 'as if he had eyes

in his fingers' ends:' with much more of the same sort. But then still comes the incredulous inquiry: 'How can you teach?' He explains, he illustrates, he offers to prove his competency to impart instruction upon their own persons, and on their own terms: and it is only when the fact is thus demonstrated that they at length believe. Thus he goes on, continually working against the prejudice which his condition creates; and thus it ever must be till people generally take the trouble to inform themselves better on the subject, and know fully how to estimate such a being as a man without sight.

"Let it not be supposed that I speak of these things with censure, or from any disposition to find fault. But these are facts, and experience is daily adding to their number; and they are mentioned as things arising from a want of correct appreciation in others of the blind condition, and not as evils necessarily connected with that condition: for I am convinced that there are simple, proper and available means, by which the mind might be brought to feel blindness as no privation at all. It is only from the friction which attends his intercourse with those who see, and not from the sense of privation in himself, that the blind man has cause for grief.

"I should be sorry in any remarks of mine, to fail to recognize a superintending and all-wise Providence: but

the Creator expects men to help one another along in the path of life; and, in the present case, the remedy can only be applied by the same hands which ignorantly and innocently deal the mischief. To this end, the real position of the blind, and the nature of their resources, must be better understood by those who can see; and truly happy shall I be, if the remarks which I have here put together, should be made in any degree instrumental in helping other blind persons over the difficulties which, by the help of God, I have been enabled to surmount."

POETRY OF THE DEAF.

ALTHOUGH my publisher has facetiously reminded me that blanks are sometimes more eloquent than printed pages, yet I am inclined to think that my readers will be better pleased with a closely printed book than with the silent eloquence of blank leaves. Wise words, happy thoughts, and healthy sentiments are always more agreeable and instructive to *me* than grave silence. It is urged by some that the world is too full of sentiment; that our literature is burdened with a sort of sickly sentimentality that enervates the mind, and like modern confectionery, poisons and inflames the imagination with high colors and false flavors. This charge is chiefly made against poetry and romance, and doubtless there is some justice in the pleading. I have never sent a poem to the press without feeling that some apology ought to accompany it. I love true poetry because I love nature; but because I love nature is no evidence that I can picture her charms in metrical verse.

It is not wonderful that the blind should scribble verse; that we should invoke the aid of the muses, and

feel about us in the darkness for beautiful similitudes and tangible imagery; and that we should feel our hearts inspired with fine sentiments. We are eminently social and sympathetic. Our ears are tuned to poetic numbers and musical cadences; but that one who has been so deaf from childhood that he could not hear the most terrific peal of thunder, should tune up his lyre and sing to his sweetheart in flowing numbers is to me very marvelous. For the benefit of the curious, and to show that true poetry is the language of the heart rather than of the intellect, that the soul may sing though surrounded by unbroken silence, I have selected the following poem from several others of less merit. As this effort at versification is severely criticised by the author himself and was originally published under protest, I withhold the author's name. Not that I consider the composition faulty, but because the writer evidently underrated his own ability, and wished only to show that poetry is *possible* to the deaf.

MARY.

ONE SPARKLE from my Mary's eye
Would I exchange for gems of Hind,
Or spices of rich Araby?
No:—a clear glowing light hath shin'd

Into the caverns of my mind,
To kindle thoughts which lay there cold,
And quicken hopes which died of old.
My soul to other vision blind,
And casting all its griefs behind,
Does count the diamonds and the gold
Which Eastern kings have left untold
But as a beggar's price to buy
One sparkle of my Mary's eye.

As the Chaldean from his plain,
Upon him saw ten thousand eyes
Look down from the unclouded skies;
And deemed them, while he looked again,
The arbiters of joy and pain,
And from their thrilling glances drew
Conclusions most sublime—if true,—
So I resume my younger lore,
And turn astrologer once more;
And happy horoscopes I raise,
Replete with cheerful destinies,
From the kindly beams that shine,
Dear Mary in those orbs of thine.

In silence I have walked full long
Adown life's narrow thorny vale,
Deaf to the melody of song,
And all music to me mute,—
From the organ's rolling peal
To the gay burst or mournful wail
Of harp, and psaltery, and lute.

Heaven's dread answer I have heard
In thunder to old ocean's roar,
As while the elements conferr'd,
Their voices shook the rock-bound shore :—
I've listened to the murmuring streams,
Which lulled my spirit into dreams,
Bright hopes and fair imaginings,
But false as all that fancy flings
Upon a page where pain and strife
Make up the history of life.

And so beneath o'ershadowing trees,
I've heard leaves rustle in the breeze,
Which brought me the melodious tale
Of the all vocal nightingale,
Or else, the cushat's coo of pride
Over his own new mated bride ;—

Yes: I have heard thee—Nature, thee,
In all thy thousand voices speak,
Which *now* are silent all to me :—
Ah, when shall this long silence break,—
And all thy tides of gladness roll
In their full torrent on my soul ?

But as the snows which long have lain
On the cold tops of Lebanon,
Melt in the glances of the sun,
And, with wild rush, into the plain
Haste down, with blessings in their train :—
So, Mary, gilded by thine eye
Griefs melt away, and fall in streams,
Of hope into the land of dreams,
And life's inanities pass by
Unheeded, without tear or sigh.

True, that the human voice divine
Falls not on this cold sense of mine ;
And that brisk commercing of thought
Which brings home rich returns, all fraught
With ripe ideas—points of view
Varied, and beautiful, and new,
Is lost, is dead, in this lone state
Where feelings sicken, thoughts stagnate,

And good and evil knowledge grows
Unguided and unpruned, and throws—
Too often a dull sickening shade,
Like that by trees of Java made,
O'er hopes and o'er desires that might
Have lived in glory and delight,
Blessed and blessing others, till
The gaspings of this life were still.

But Mary, when I look on thee
  All things beside neglected lie,
There is deep eloquence to me
  In the bright sparkle of thine eye.
How sweetly can their beamings roll
Volumes of meaning to my soul,
How long—how vainly all—might words
Express what one quick glance affords.
So spirits talk perhaps when they
Their feelings and their thoughts convey,
Till heart to heart, and soul to soul
Is in one moment opened all.

Mary, one sparkle of thine eye
  I'd not exchange for all the gems
  That shine in kingly diadems,
Or spices of rich Araby.

My heart would count th' refined gold
Which Eastern kings have left untold
But as a beggar's price to buy
One sparkle of my Mary's eye.

* * * * *

I *am* a beggar ; poor indeed !
That eye whose glance was ample meed
For all the blood-strife that I knew,
The toil, the sorrow I went through,
No love, no strength, no skill could save
From the obstructions of the grave.
Was not that glance of heaven ? Oh, why
Should things so little earthly die ?
Why for the bridal of the tomb
Clothe them in loveliness and bloom ?

Who can these hard things answer ? THOU
To whom perforce I turn me now.
Oh ! I'm not only deaf but blind—
Blind, blind of heart. Oh ! seek me, find
Thy lost one—he is prone to stray
From that sequestered and cool way,
Where thine walk, guided by thine eye
And cheered ;—and THOU dost never die.

It seems to me that no one can read this poem without being forced to the conclusion that poetic inspiration may reach the heart through the eye, though the ear be dead to the harmony of poetic numbers. The words are evidently not chosen for the sake of euphony, but to convey as clearly as possible the author's sentiment. It is true this effusion is lacking in what is known as rhythmic jingle, but for this reason it is to me all the more agreeable. As I have yet space for another selection, I gladly give place to one more specimen of iambic verse from the same author:

ALTERNATIVES.

Were all the beams that ever shone
  From all the stars of day or night,
Collected in one single cone,
  Unutterably bright;—
I'd give them for one glance of heaven
Which might but hint of sin forgiven.

Could all the voices and glad sounds
  Which have *not* fallen on my sense,
Be rendered up in one hour's bounds—
  A gift immense;—
I'd for one whisper to my heart
Give all the joy this might impart.

If the great deep now offered all
The treasures in her bosom stored,
And to my feet I could now call
That mighty hoard ;—
I'd spurn it utterly for some
Small treasure in the world to come.

If the sweet scents of every flower—
Each one of which cheers more than wine—
One plant could from its petals pour,
And that were mine ;—
I would give up that glorious prize
For one faint breath from Paradise.

Were all the pleasures I have known,
"So few, so very far between,"
Into one great sensation thrown—
Not *then* all mean ;—
I'd give it freely for one smile
From Him who died for me erewhile.

REMINISCENCES OF INSTITUTION LIFE.

It is now about twenty-five since I took my clearance at the port of the old Institution for the blind, at New York, in the form of a parchment roll tied with a blue ribbon, weighed anchor in its usually calm and peaceful harbor, and pushed out on the rough sea of life to paddle my own little bark.

It cannot, therefore, be expected that I shall remember distinctly, and record accurately the many amusing and interesting incidents that occurred during my pupilage there. I was an inmate of that Institution eight years,—seven years a student, and one year a teacher of music and literature. During the latter part of this term, I was brought into quite intimate social relations with the officers and teachers, and learned something of the workings of such an Institution. If distance lends enchantment to the view, time also mellows the heart, softens asperities, and sweetens all the bitter feelings incident to a student's life. I feel prepared, therefore, after this lapse of time, to look back on my Institution

life without prejudice, animosity, or favoritism. I would not write, or speak a word to injure the feelings of my old class-mates, to save my sorest corn from being stepped on ; and for the directors, officers and teachers of that period, I entertain the highest regard.

The process of seasoning new pupils, or hazing, as it is called at college, is much milder than in schools for the seeing, but is always made the occasion of great merriment. It consists chiefly in playing practical jokes on the country greenhorns, (or pumpkin-eaters as the freshmen are called,) for the purpose of taking the rusticity off from them, and reducing their self esteem to a healthy temperature. When a new pupil enters the Institute, he is generally put in charge of some pious, sedate young man, who is instructed to act as his guide and body-guard, until he has learned the shape of the house, playgrounds, &c., his way to the dining hall, dressing room, dormitories, music rooms, school rooms, water closet, &c. These are sad, gloomy days for him. He has left a pleasant home, perhaps, kind and indulgent friends, whose genuine love and sympathy he greatly misses. During this time he is hardly noticed by the older pupils, and if spoken to at all by the principal or teachers, it is done in a very condescending way. The matron, or mother of the establishment, (who has usu-

ally some heart,) singles out the new comers, and bestows upon them such little marks of kindness as her arduous duties will allow. In this way the novice is left to season for a few weeks, before he is put through the pickers. He is commonly first attracted by the sound of the great organ, pianos and band instruments, and expresses a great desire to learn to play each and all of them. An old joke in my time was to send the would-be-musician to the old professor of music who could swear fluently in German, French and English, and when annoyed would furnish a specimen of each, or if very angry would mix the three into the most ludicrous profanity I ever heard. He seldom exhibited irritation, however, when a new pupil invaded his music room. He would take him kindly by the hand and say, "Vell, my young friend, vot you vant?" On being told by the young rustic that he wanted to practice on the chapel organ, or wanted the mouth-piece to the swinette, or would the Prof. please lend him a musical ear, that the boys said he kept them, the old professor would laugh and say: "Tem roguish poys vant to fool you; it vill be yet some time before you vill blay the pig organ; be patient, my young frient, you must not believe everyting vot you hear."

Another game, was to make the new scholar believe

that it was customary to go to supper on Sunday night, in his stocking feet, or without a coat. This afforded the boys an opportunity to step on his toes, or called the Superintendent's attention to his indecorous appearance, and he would be sent from the dining room.

It may be supposed that a school composed entirely of blind boys and girls would be easily governed; that insubordination to superiors, flagrant violations of rule, and mischievous pranks could not be reckoned among the troubles and perplexities of managing such an institution. But I apprehend that the officers and teachers of schools for the blind, can fully sympathise with principals and professors of colleges and seminaries all over the world. One would naturally think that children whose sightless condition would seem to render them so helpless and dependent, would be passive, tractable, and not disposed to engage in tricks and games for the purpose of annoying and teasing each other, or their teachers; but this is not the case, human nature is perverse wherever you find it, and the love of fun and frolic is as strong in the blind youth as in any.

A piece of mischief that seemed to annoy the Superintendent more than any other, and never failed to put the whole house in disorder, was stealing the bell-clappers. This would occur periodically, three or four times

a year, but the perpetrators were never detected. The confusion occasioned by it was extremely amusing. When the French cook, whose duty it was to wake us up in the morning, would climb up to the third story to ring the office bell and find it clapperless his rage knew no bounds. He would shake the voiceless bell, and swear in French, English and Dutch, while we were smothering our laughter under the bed-clothes. After assuring himself that the thing wouldn't give down, he would rapidly descend to the kitchen muttering, "I vill tell Mizzer Cham von blind boy he dam rascal." The principal teacher, who usually rung the prayer bell, was a very amiable man, and would have been wise and equal to any emergency if he could have carried all the volumes of Chambers' Encyclopedia in his coat pocket. He had inventive genius enough, however, to supply a vacant bell with an improvised clapper. This he did by pounding on it with the poker; but not loud enough to wake up the boys, who were good sleepers, and seldom permitted anything but the danger of losing their breakfast, or the cry of fire to disturb their slumbers. Consequently, the chapel services on these occasions were thinly attended. A solemn lecture, however, from the Superintendent, was generally enjoyed by those present. The same difficulty was met by the dining room girls in

calling us to breakfast, for it always happened that all the bells were robbed of their tongues in the same night; but the poker being again called into requisition, the breakfast bell was rung, and we who were ready for the feast of smoky coffee, skippery cheese, rancid butter and stale bread, marched in and took our respective places, behind our respective stools, and waited for a blessing to be invoked upon these bounties. The signal for saying grace, (which was generally done by one of the older pupils in a pious tone of voice, but with rapid utterance,) was a tap of the bell; but as the bell wouldn't tap without the poker, grace was omitted, and we proceeded to business.

I may as well say here that we did not eat in silence, but freely bandied jokes, related anecdotes, fired squibs of witticism, and speared each other to our heart's content. I was always glad of this laxness in discipline, for I think we enjoyed this feast of mind and flow of soul better than our bread and coffee. During the breakfast hour, the Superintendent sometimes read to us from the morning papers, when order and silence were enforced; but never on bell-clapper days,—he was too much out of temper. There was a rule that no one should leave the dining room until the bell was struck. This Hannah would do by hitting it against the iron post, which was

the signal for a general laugh and scamper for the play-ground.

At nine o'clock, the hour for study and work to commence, the bell and poker were again rung; but before noon the man of all work was sent for and new tongues put in all the bells. The joke was then dropped, and things moved on in the even tenor of their way, until the bell-clapper fever again returned, when it would be found that all the bells in the house were again speechless, except the belles who used to flirt with the clerks and assistants; *their* tongues were never silent. Again the servants and faculty were troubled and exasperated, from the French cook to the President of the board of managers, and renewed efforts were made to detect the author of this mischief. Finding that lectures, threats, and intimidations failed, the Superintendent hit upon a a new plan which he thought must discover the culprit.

All the boys who were thought capable of such malicious mischief, or of having any knowledge of the matter, were summoned to the office, and stood up in a row along the wall on one side of the room. The old professor who believed that a guilty conscience made a guilty face, then took his position in front of the row, where he could see the expression of each countenance, and began to question and cross question, somewhat as

follows: "John, look me in the face." "I can't, sir." "Well, turn your face this way." "With pleasure, sir." "Now, tell me, do you know anything about this bell-clapper business?" "No, sir." "Have you had no hand in it?" "No, sir, nor had it in my hand." "You are insolent." "Beg pardon, sir, I didn't intend it." "David, can you tell me who it is that makes a practice of taking the clappers from the bells?" "No, sir, it's a bad practice and makes us fellows a great deal of trouble." "Hark, sir! I did not ask for comments. Joseph, Daniel, Abel, Isaac, are either of you guilty of meddling with the bells?" "No, sir." "Do you know of any boys bad enough to commit such a misdemeanor?" "Oh, yes," responded all the voices in concert. "Will you name them?" "Well, let me see, there is Mr. Root," said one, meaning George F., the vocal teacher. "And Robert Elder," said another, "And Mr. Reiff" said the third. "Silence, boys," said the professor in a voice of thunder, "I will have you all punished. Now let me warn you; if I can find the one who is guilty of this outrage upon the peace and good order of this house, I will have him expelled without a moment's notice. You may go." After this novel examination, the Superintendent came up in the schoolroom, where several of the older pupils and graduates were assem-

bled, and with tears in his voice, if not in his eyes, entreated the young men to aid him so far as might be, in suppressing this practice of robbing the bells. This was cheerfully promised, and one young man out of the fullness of his heart, offered to send the bells to the hardware and have the clappers restored, paying for them from his own slender purse. This generous offer, I am ashamed to say, was accepted, and had no better effect than to attach suspicion to him, that he was in some way implicated, *particeps criminis*, as the lawyers have it; but the real culprit was never detected. The bell-clapper fever still visited the Institution periodically, and no remedy was found, until a large bell was purchased and hung on the chapel. This was rung for all occasions until the people outside began to regard it as a nuisance.

One morning this bell had not been rung for breakfast in season, and the French cook, whose irascible temper could brook no delay, rushed into the dining room, grasped the bell rope and gave it a tremendous pull. The floor being bare and somewhat icy, the cook's feet flew up, and his head came down, so quick that he had not time to say, "*Dieu de ciel! J'ai casse ma tete!*" before his back struck the floor with a thud that jarred the mugs on the table, and frightened

the rats in the cellar. The bell rope, which some sly urchin had cut nearly off was still in his hands, the devil in his heart, fury and vengeance depicted on his countenance. With a muttered curse on "von damn blind boy," and something about poison, he left the room amid explosions of laughter from the waiting girls.

And yet this same old Frenchman had a chord of sympathy in his nature, and some generous impulses. He had a few favorites among the boys, and I fortunately was one of them. He used frequently to invite me into his kitchen and pantry, to give me cakes, baked apples, and other nicknacks. He has even brought tarts and pieces of cranberry pie to my bed. This was intended for kindness, but it nearly ruined my digestion. One night after the ten o'clock bell had rung, which was the last curfew, feeling tremendously hungry, I went with a chum of mine over to the kitchen, and we were each rewarded with a huge slice of bread and butter and a hunk of cheese. While we were standing before the fire and munching our lunch, in walked no less a personage than the grave and dignified Superintendent. We heard him coming and knew his step, but there was no escape. Strange to say, however, he did not reprove us, but administered a severe rebuke to John, the cook, ending with his usual admonition: "Now let this be

the *very last time*." When this comes to the ear of my friend the "Major," he will remember how ardently we wished for a small hole to crawl out at.

Notwithstanding this old Frenchman's freaks of generosity, he was made the victim of many tricks and pranks, both by the boys and girls. One night as he was locking the screen door, a wash dish of water, tar and flour, was emptied on his bare head. He had long, curly hair, and bushy whiskers, wore a red shirt and white apron. The sorry plight, therefore, in which he appeared before the Superintendent's door, can be better imagined than described. The water was dripping from his clothes, the flour and tar were in his hair and whiskers, when with frantic rage he rushed into Mr. C.'s presence, gesticulating violently. I will not attempt to describe his language. No one could do it. It was not made up of words, but broken ejaculations in French, English, Portuguese, and a dozen unknown tongues, interspersed with coughs, sneezes and oaths, that even an Indian agent could not have interpreted. "Never mind, John, go and wash," said the astonished Superintendent, trying hard to keep down his risibles, but ready to burst with laughter, "I will attend to those bad boys." But the matter was never investigated.

Another remarkable character at the Institution was

John the baker. He was a full blooded Englishman, morose and taciturn, and so cross that no one dared to meddle with him. One evening, several of the older pupils and graduates of both sexes, went out to spend a social hour or two, and as it often happened, they did not return until long after the hour for retiring. So on reaching the Institution grounds they found the house securely locked, and judging from the stillness that prevailed, everybody fast asleep. Here was a dilemma. They couldn't get in and they couldn't stay out. At last a happy thought struck one of the young men. He remembered that John the baker kept late hours in order to have hot rolls in readiness for the officers' breakfast. Knowing about the locality of the bake-room, he went around on Thirth-third street and rapped on the window. "Who is there?" said a gruff voice. "John, please come to the front door and unlock it;" said Robert in a low voice. "Not to save you from 'anging;'" growled the baker. "I 'ave just got my hoven 'ot and I caunt leave it." "Only come and turn the knob," pleaded Rob, "it will only take a minute." "Well," said John, "go a'ead hand make 'aste." In a moment he was at the door, threw it open and rushed out. The door, having a spring, immediately closed and the night-latch caught. When John found himself

locked out, his rage was terrible. He kicked, he jumped, he swore and ran round the circle like a mad bull, ejaculating with every jump, "Oh my hoven! my hoven!" The French cook having been at last aroused, the door was opened again, and the baker rushed in like a weasel in a knot-hole.

I am glad to be able to record this fact, that among so many boys representing the different classes and grades of society, very few had habits of dissipation, and few were mean enough to steal from each other. Pies, cakes, nuts, candy and other edibles were not safe, however, in drawers, trunks or desks, without being securely locked. I have often had tobacco and cigars stolen, and one day missed a bottle of camphor liniment, which contained some caustic ingredient. On Sunday I detected the odor of my liniment on one of the boys' heads. He had mistaken it for hair oil. He was a lame boy, and enjoyed the soubriquet of Timber Shin, because he had a wooden leg, for the purchase of which I had contributed my last half dollar, and I thought the stealing of my liniment but a poor return for my charity, and was only sorry it did not take all his hair out.

One of the graduates who was employed as an assistant music teacher, was greatly annoyed by having the lock of his drawer picked and his dinner stolen. He

boarded some distance from the Institution, and to save himself the trouble of walking to and from his boarding house, he would bring his dinner in a little pail, and deposit it in his private drawer in the dressing room. But frequently when he went for his lunch, he would find the pail empty. He held several inquests over this lunch-pail, but failed to elicit any evidence that seemed to point to the guilty party. Day after day his lunch would disappear, in the same mysterious and provoking manner. This was too much for even a good-natured Scotchman to bear. He plead, he expostulated, he entreated, he threatened; but all to no purpose. It is said there are some things in this world that have no conscience, and a hungry stomach is one of them. The boys would steal his dinner. At last he collected the music-room full of pupils, and announced with terrible earnestness, that he would put poison in his dinner-pail, that the next villain who stole his dinner should die as he deserved. "Well," said a little fellow, "he'll die with a full stomach, that's one consolation." Finally the professor hit upon the plan of leaving his lunch-pail in the office. This proved to be a safer plan, but even then he sometimes found it empty.

I do not know that theft is justifiable under any circumstances, but I could never find it in my heart to con-

demn a poor hungry boy or girl for stealing a good dinner, especially in a public institution or boarding house where the fare is so meager. We had pie but once a year, and turkey or chicken on Christmas only; but these extras were usually donated by our good friend and patron saint, Nicholas Dean. He should have a monument erected by the blind with this inscription: "He was eyes for the sightless, he had feeling for their infirmity, sympathy for their sorrows, kind words to cheer, and his heart and purse were ever open to their needs."

In justice to the committee on supplies, I ought to say here, that an abundance of the staple articles of food were provided, but they were never prepared and brought on the pupils' table in a palatable condition. In plain English they were not properly cooked, and the style in which they were served up would have disgusted an Esquimaux or a Comanche Indian. The officers' table, however, was bountifully furnished with a generous variety of food, well cooked and served up in princely style. The smell of beefsteak, hot cakes, and good coffee of a winter's morning would exasperate us beyond measure; for we knew that the savory odors of these luxuries were all we should have the privilege of enjoying. I used to think, and still believe that a more hygi-

enic manner of living, would have been less expensive and less damaging to our digestion. After a hearty dinner of pork and beans, I used to mope about, the rest of the day with about as much life and activity as an anaconda might be supposed to exhibit after swallowing a Ceylon missionary. Although I have not the statistics to compare, I will hazard the conjecture that "Our Home on the Hillside" will feed the same number of inmates on healthier, more palatable, more nutritious food, for much less money than it costs our Institution to furnish its tables, and while we rarely had a toothsome morsel, the guests and patients at "Our Home" fare sumptuously every day.

One winter for some reason the committee had supplied a large quantity of corned beef. This was worked up into every variety of dish that the inventive genius of a French cook could devise, till the pupils loathed the very smell of it, as did the children of Israel the quails in the wilderness. At last, one of the older pupils who had some faculty for rhyming, went into the office while the Superintendent was at dinner, and by the aid of an amanuensis wrote the following lines on the office slate:

"Mr. B., we have come to the sage conclusion,
That this benevolent Institution

Has searched all over the broad creation,
To find the mammoth bull of Bashan;
That he was found some time last fall,
And corned, with head, and horns, and all;
Corned beef raw, and corned beef roasted,
Corned beef boiled, and corned beef toasted,
Corned beef tender, and corn beef tough,
Now, Mr. B., we've had corned beef enough."

But the corned beef was on hand and had to be eaten.

If at this late date, I feel my heart go out in gratitude toward those who proved themselves true friends of our Institution, I find in it no vindictive feeling for those who served the public, as officers of a beneficent Institution, for the salary they received only: and love of petty power, I might have added, for they had the privilege of tyrannizing over a class of persons entirely at their mercy, whose only resources and facilities for education could be found at such a school, who must accept the situation, or go home disgraced, and into the world to do life's battle, not only blind, but ignorant.

To show that matters sometimes reached a point where forbearance ceased to be a virtue, and that the pupils had spirit enough to repel indignities and insults, I will relate one little incident. Under the state regulation, which very justly does not exclude any person

from the benefits and advantages of our Institution, a half witted negro boy was received and placed at once on an equality with the older pupils; that is, one of the best beds was assigned him in the dormitory among the young men, whose olfactories were rather sensitive. Had he been a colored boy of good sense, and cleanly habits, no one would have raised any serious objection; but he was a poor simpleton, and filthy withal. The boys accordingly called an indignation meeting and voted Cuff out of their bedroom. They resolved that a darkey should not be stuck under their noses, and appointed a committee to remove the nuisance, which was speedily done. He was taken out of his bed and put into the bed of Mr. J., the principal teacher, whose room was only separated from ours by a thin slat partition. At that time Mr. J. was courting the nurse, and did not usually come up to his den until about midnight. Several of us were lying awake to enjoy the fun. About twelve o'clock the professor came tripping along, heel and toe, with lamp in hand. In breathless silence we listened. He opened the door of his bedroom, but did not go in. He stood for some time on the threshold, in utter amazement. Whether he was angry or frightened, or thought he saw Banquo's ghost, we could not determine. At length he walked cautiously in, put down his

lamp and stood in mute astonishment, gazing no doubt on the sooty face and woolly head that pressed his downy pillow. "Henry!" said he, shaking the snoring Ethiopian, "what does this mean? Who put you here?" "I dunno, g'way! g'way!" said the disturbed darkey. "Henry! Henry! wake up, you are in the wrong bed," screamed the professor. "G'way! g'way!" growled the idiot. By this time the boys in the dormitory were fairly awake and enjoying the sport. We did not dare to laugh aloud, fearing Mr. J. would know our voices, and report us at headquarters. Very soon, however, he took his lamp and went out as he came in, heel and toe, through the hall in search of the chambermaid. Now was our time to laugh, and the bedroom rung with exultant voices. Directly Biddy came up, took the negro to the sick room, and changed the sheets of the professor's bed. This was the last snuff we had of the fragrant African, and no effort was made to detect and punish the offenders. It was doubtless considered a good joke and dropped.

In order to preclude the possibility of intermarriage among the pupils, and to guard against other direful consequences, the Fathers of the Institution thought it expedient to adopt as the first rule,—"There shall be an entire separation of the sexes." Of course this rule had

some modifications. We were permitted to meet in the public parlor, in the recitation rooms, chapel, &c., but only under the vigilant eye of the matron or some of the teachers. Like other youths, many of us were ardent, and longed to lavish our affections on something human or divine, and were not content to worship our divinities at a distance. There was a partition of matched boards between the girls' and boys' piazza. Through this, some rebel against rule first, had cut a hole large enough to kiss through, and to shake hands with the girls.

" Through this little chink the lover could greet her,
And secrecy made their courting the sweeter,
While Peter kissed Thisbe, and Thisbe kissed Peter,—
For kisses, like folks with diminutive souls,
Will manage to creep through the smallest of holes."

One day while the officers were at dinner, we made a battering ram of one of the boys who wore stoga boots, and battered this partition down. It was afterwards replaced by a double thickness of boards, securely nailed, with tin between. Even this barrier would soon have been cut away, had not the culprit been detected and summarily expelled from the Institution. But this did not prevent clandestine meetings, and harmless little

flirtations. I doubt if granite walls and solid iron-fences, horse-high and pig-tight, could have kept the boys and girls apart.

Love-making among young people who could not even see each other's blushes, would seem ludicrous in the extreme to those who look for manifestations of the tender passion in the expression of the face, or glance of the eye: indeed it was deemed very reprehensible by the officers and teachers, who wanted to monopolize this business themselves. I am glad to be able to record, however, that from all the intimacies which rule first could not suppress, there came no harm, no disgrace, no scandal to the white pupils of our Institution during the eight years I spent there. It was reported that a little misfortune happened to one of the negro girls; but her ignorance, and her low moral and social standing, should be accepted as some apology in her case. It shows that intelligence, refinement, moral training, and social position, are great safeguards to virtue.

It may be wondered whether any genuine courtships ever took place among the inmates of the Institution. I overheard one evening a specimen which I am now at liberty to describe, as the loving couple have been married for many years. The young man had been to town and filled his pockets with peanuts and candy, which he

doubtless intended for his sweetheart; for he came up to the graduates' retreat, then fronting on Eighth Avenue, and went directly to the sitting room where he found his dulciana waiting for him. She was a most excellent girl, good and conscientious, but would encourage these clandestine meetings. Besides being entirely without sight, she was partially deaf, and her voice was anything but melodious. When her lover threw a handful of peanuts in her lap, he said, "Lucretia, do you love peanuts?" "Do I love you much?" she repeated, "Why Abel, you know I do." "No! are you fond of nuts,—*pea*nuts?" he shouted in a louder tone of voice, and blushing so deeply I could almost hear it in the darkness. "I have brought you some peanuts and candy," he said, sitting down close beside her, and lovingly taking her hand, I suppose, for this is the medium through which the magnetic currents may pass, when eye cannot signal to eye by tender glances, the emotions of the heart. "Abel, do you like peanuts?" she said. "Yes, indeed. I am very fond of them," he replied. "Why, how do you crack 'em?" she simpered. "With my fingers, just so,"—giving one a snap which she must have heard. "Let me crack some for you," she said presently, "and you take some of the candy." "No, I had rather take a kiss, darling." Here the con-

versation became so sweet, that I do not care to record it for the benefit of outsiders who may not feel the same sympathy for the love-smitten couple, that I did just at that period of my life.

I may truthfully say that many of the blind are addicted to habits of intemperance and dissipation. This is sometimes excused in them on account of their limited resources for pleasure and amusement. But I ask for no such apology in my case; I think it will not be valid at the day of judgment. As I have said, but few of the boys at our Institute had formed these habits, but there was a laxness in moral sentiment in this respect, as well as in profanity. Many of them would drink when opportunity offered, and swear as proficiently as if they had been schooled in a navy yard or the U. S. congress.

There was one young man who worked in the willow shop who loved his toddy and often smuggled himself out, and smuggled himself in with a bottle of the delicious in his pocket. There was a rule, however, that prohibited any one leaving the premises without a permit from the Superintendent, and the back yard and playground were surrounded by a tight board fence about eight feet high, with sharp spikes driven in the top. But these the boys had pounded down in several places so that they might scale the fence without tearing

their breeches. This our whiskey smuggler attempted to do one night, but just as he had got one leg over, the other was caught and held with a grip like an iron vise. He kicked and swore, threatened and coaxed, but all to no purpose. At last he changed his base, drew his leg back, jumped down and commenced belaboring his enemy over the head with his hickory cane. "William! William! what are you about?" cried the astonished Superintendent, in an agitated voice. "Do you know whom you are pounding?" "Why, is it you, Mr. C.?" growled Bill, "I thought it was one of the boys." This was not "Lord Stanley's" last adventure, however, he continued to go out after his dram and smuggled in many a bottle of blue ruin.

There was also a rule against bringing in victuals. This was intended as a sanitary measure, to prevent the pupils from injuring their stomachs with pastry, confectionery, &c.; but I used to think that the half-cooked food, the tainted meats and rancid butter they gave us, were more damaging than the little pies, cakes, and other nicknacks we sometimes bought at the city bakery, Ninth Avenue.

One Saturday when our breakfast was slimmer than usual, (and which in truth some of us had missed by not being present at morning prayers,) a few of us, the

"Wild Scotchman" among the rest, made up a purse and sent out to the bakery for rusk, gingerbread and cheese. "Honest George," a boy who had partial sight, was commissioned to purchase the provisions. On his way in, with his well-laden basket, he was captured in the front hall by the Superintendent, and compelled to disgorge. In the meantime we were anxiously waiting with our appetites whetted to a razor edge, and when George came up, and announced that our provender had been confiscated, our rage was fearful to behold. The "Wild Scotchman" cursed the Superintendent for a fool,—hoped the Lord would never forgive him,—said *he* would not if *he* was the Lord. Suffice it to say, we never got that basket of contraband provisions.

At breakfast one morning we received a very liberal supply of brown sugar. This was so unusual that it excited comment, and many opinions were hazarded as to the cause. Some were suspicious that the sugar was not clean, and refused to eat it. Soon after breakfast a large number of us were assembled on the piazza to enjoy the sunshine, and the sugar question was again brought up and discussed. "Bedad, boys, I can explain that;" said Murphy in his rich Irish brogue, "but it's a delicate matter, and I'll not be afther betraying me friends." This hint excited our suspicions, and we were

determined to ascertain, if possible, what Tom knew about it. "Oh tell, please tell us, Tom," chimed in several voices. "Ye'll tell the girls, said Tom, "the swate crayters, and they'll turn their delicate stomachs inside out." This confirmed our worst suspicions, and we insisted on hearing what Tom knew about the sugar. "Well, now, bedad, boys, I'll tell ye," said he, "if ye'll promise not to tell the ould Professor." We promised. "Hannah whispered to me not to ate a bit of the sugar, for one of John's cats had a litter of kittens on the cloth that was spread over the sugar barrel. It made a nice nest for the cat; do you see?" By this time several stomachs were emptied of their contents, and others were heaving, some were spitting, some swearing, others vowing vengeance on John the cook, and his cats. Meantime Tom had vanished from the crowd, and having gotten beyond our reach, he shouted from the shop door: "Boys, it's all a lie. Hannah didn't say any such thing." "Come back, Tom, you rascal," shouted a dozen voices. But Tom was gone.

Whether this story of Tom's was true or not we had great cause of complaint against these same cats. They were the only privileged characters in the house. They had access not only to the kitchen and pantry, but the dining rooms, and were allowed to run over the tables,

to nibble the bread and to scent the rooms like a petroleum refinery. Against this cat worship we had protested many times, both to the matron and to the Superintendent. We had presented a long category of complaints,—that our bread and butter tasted of cats,—that the dining room smelled of cats,—that our sleep was disturbed by cats, and that a great catastrophe would soon happen if John did not take care of his cats.

As a cataplasm for our wounded feelings, we were promised that if we would destroy the cats we should have an oyster supper. This we knew would be a difficult task to perform, as they were John's pets and he could not be persuaded to kill them, so we resolved to do it ourselves. We accordingly erected a gallows in the alley and agreed with Sammy, a little Indian boy, to pay him sixpence for every French cat he would bring us. In a few days all but one had paid the penalty of their offenses against cleanliness and good order. Counting nine lives to each cat, sixty-three lives had been scratched out. The last one was difficult to capture. He was a large, spotted animal, rather shy, and the prime favorite of his master. John had noticed the disappearance of his pets and suspected the conspiracy. He therefore kept an eye out for his favorite. One sunny day Sammy saw grimalkin slumbering on the grass

in the bleach yard, but unfortunately around this enclosure was a high picket fence. Cautiously our little Indian scout climbed the paling, and crept across the lawn. He seized the cat and ran for the fence, but John's vigilant eye saw him. With a fearful oath he rushed from the kitchen and across the lawn like a whirlwind. Sammy had secured his prize and was running at the top of his speed; but the race was unequal. The Indian had short legs and a heavy cat to carry. The Frenchman was barefoot, bare-headed, and under a high pressure of fury. Sam reached the fence; dropped the cat, threw himself over, and struck square on the top of his head. "*Envoyez au diable!*" hissed the Frenchman as he picked up his cat and returned to his kitchen. That cat we never got, nor the oyster supper, but we did get a clean dining room, and slept without the nightly serenades of a cat concert.

In taking a retrospective view of my Institution life, I now see things in a very different light from the medium through which I then saw them. I now see the wisdom, justice and importance of rules and restrictions which then seemed unwise, oppressive, and cruel. Some of the best measures adopted for our comfort and convenience, were regarded by us as tyrannical, humiliating, and insulting to our sense of propriety. Why

cannot students see and understand that there must be discipline, or there can be no order? In an open resistance to authority, we could not hope to be successful, so we resorted to strategy and conspiracy. In one instance that I remember we came off victorious.

It was found that the pupils were subjected to impertinent questions, and other interruptions during study hours. Large placards were therefore printed and hung up in the school and music rooms, work-shops and halls. The letters were big and black, and read as follows:— "Visitors are particularly requested not to interrupt the pupils when they are engaged in work or study." This was intended for our protection, and why any one should have felt aggrieved I do not now understand; but for some reason both the boys and girls felt offended, and determined by a concerted action to show their displeasure, by turning all the cards with their faces to the wall. This hint was disregarded and the cards were again turned print side out. Resolved that the obnoxious cards should not interfere with our pleasure and privilege of talking with visitors, we took them all down and burned them. For this we received a severe lecture. New cards were printed and put up, but they shared the same fate. At last the plan was abandoned as impracticable, and we were jubilant.

The blind are eminently social in their nature. We were fond of company, and always delighted to have people from the outside world come to see us. They amused us with their curious questions and we found pleasure in chatting with them, and wished to learn as much as possible of the great world in which we hoped some day to make a sensation.

It is astonishing what absurd questions are sometimes put to the blind by people of ordinary intelligence on any other subject. A lady once came to me in the music room, where I was practicing the piano. After listening for a moment she said, "I don't see how you find the keys." "Well, I don't see, either," said I. "I don't see," she continued, "how you blind people learn music at all." "We don't see, either," said I, "we do it by hearing." "Oh, how wonderful! but I don't see how you learn the way through this great house." "We don't see, either," said I, "we walk by faith." "Oh, how wonderful!" she repeated in a thoughtful tone. I had learned my catechism and was prepared for the next question. "What do you blind folks do when you get hungry?" "Why, we eat," said I, "if we can find anything fit to eat." "Oh, how can you? how do you find your victuals?" "Oh, that is easy enough," said I, "we eat nothing but spoon victuals from large mugs,

with one end of a string tied to the handle and the other to one of our front teeth. This serves to guide the spoon, so that we are able to find our mouths." "Oh, how wonderful!" she repeated as she left the room.

To show what liberal souls there are in this world I will mention one incident, every word of which is true. One day I was called from the chemistry class and requested to go up to the chapel and play the organ for some ladies. This flattered my vanity, for although I practiced the big organ I was by no means a proficient on that instrument. So up I went, drew out the grand organ stop and made the thing *toot* to the entire satisfaction of the ladies. As they were leaving one of them took my hand and dropped into it a coin which I at once recognized as an old-fashioned penny. "We are not allowed to accept such large donations," said I, throwing the copper after them as they left the chapel.

We were always glad, however, to entertain company, and nothing pleased us better than to be called from the work-shop to sing, or play in the band. One day some ladies of distinction came and desired to hear the famous Institution band. The members were soon assembled in the large music room, and seemed to be waiting for the ladies to come in, and for a signal from the leader to strike up the hurdy-gurdy with the inevitable Star

Spangled Banner, Hail Columbia, and Yankee Doodle. While we were thus waiting the door stood wide open and a strong breeze was blowing through the room. This I determined to stop by closing the door, but in trying to find the knob I placed my hand square upon the full round breast of a plump little lady who stood leaning against the door. With a little scream of surprise she slipped out into the hall and I slipped back to my place in the band with cheeks as red as a peony.

These ridiculous blunders, however, were not so common among us who were entirely without sight as with the purblind, or those with partial sight. The young man who played the leading instrument in the band was one of this kind. He was very tender-hearted, and if by accident he hurt any one his very soul bubbled out in apologetic expressions like, "Oh, dear!" "I beg ten thousand pardons!" "How awkward!" "Excuse me!" One day Charley was going down the Eighth avenue at a pretty high rate of speed. A bevy of little girls were on the sidewalk and did not see Charley coming. As he ran against the first she fell against the next, and so on, until they lay in a heap like so many ninepins. Aware of the mischief he had done, with his heart brimming over with sorrow, he stooped down, and finding what he supposed to be a pair of bare arms he set the

little one square on the top of her head. "Poor little dear," said he, "are you hurt?"

Many of us were in the habit of travelling about the city alone, as I do in Dansville, but accidents of that kind rarely happened.

As I have said, we had frequent opportunities to entertain visitors. The Institution was flooded with them on visiting days. The elite of New York and Brooklyn came with their fine equipages, and strangers to the city in search of strange sights and wonderful things were sure to visit the Blind Asylum, as they called it. Guides were selected from among the blind girls, who were polite and chatty, to show strangers through the building and over the grounds. One day one of the guides brought a bevy of young ladies into the music room where Mr. A., an old friend and classmate of mine was practicing the piano. He had made just progress enough to accompany his voice in one song,—The Silver Moon,—but had learned only the first verse of it. The ladies asked him to sing, which after some coaxing he consented to do. He said he knew but one song, that it was a very long one, and feared the ladies would grow weary before he finished. After receiving many assurances of their patience, he began as follows:

"As I strayed from my cot at the close of the day,
To gaze on the beauties of June," &c.

After he had sung the first verse he stopped to comment, as he could not play an interlude,—said the next verse was much finer in sentiment, and sang the same one again. The ladies did not seem to notice the repetition, taking it for granted that a blind gentleman would not hoax them. After he had sung it three times over they began to "smell a mice," and went laughing out of the room.

Mr. A. was a general favorite with all the inmates of the house, especially on the ladies' side. He was amiable, affable, fat and funny. One day he was sitting at his desk in the young men's school room, busily engaged with something that kept him silent and demure. It was on Saturday and the boys were engaged in playing cards, checkers, dominoes, &c., and several times invited Mr. A. to take part in their games and sports; but he as often excused himself with the plea that he was busy. Finally a motion was made that Mr. A. sing a song in his Dempsterian style. This motion was carried unanimously, and a committee of three appointed to wait on the recluse, and compel him to sing in case he refused. I was on the committee and appointed chairman, or spokesman. We approached Mr. A.'s seat, and I said with assumed dignity: "Sir, we represent the brain and muscle of the N. Y. Institute for the

blind, and we have been instructed to wait on the great Tycoon, and to ask his excellency to favor us with a song. In case he refuses we are to enforce the rule of the house that 'a bird that can sing and wont sing must be made to sing.'" "Wait a moment," said Mr. A., closing his desk, "and I will consider your message." Planting himself on the top of it he said, "Boys, I warn you to let me alone. I am a dangerous man. I weigh one hundred and seventy-five pounds, and my fist weighs more than I do. I shall not sing. What are you going to do about it?" I slipped along on the desk beside him, took hold of his left arm, and said: "Old fellow, you are not angry, are you?" "No, sir; never better natured in my life; but Hall, I advise you to keep away. You may get hurt." Just then a little nervous fellow, who was on the committee, came up in front to catch him by the legs. At that moment his fist came down like a sledge-hammer, and struck the fellow plumb on the top of his head, knocking him down as quick as if a thunderbolt had struck him. Anticipating a flank movement on my part he gave me a sling which sent me half way across the floor. The other member of the committee was an Irishman, who thinking matters were taking a serious turn, pitched in to fight in good earnest; but as he had no shillaly, he made but little

impression on the works, and the hundred-and-seventy-five pounder soon silenced his battery. Having thus achieved his independence, Mr. A. resumed his seat and went on with his work as serenely as if nothing had happened. This account is strictly true, and shows that life in those Institutions is not such a very tame affair after all.

Two young men had a fight one day in the hall, as we were going to dinner. No officers were called, fair play was allowed, and the fight was finished.

We had one boy who had rather fight than to eat his dinner; but the pugilistic element I am glad to say, was not common; most of us had rather eat.

Our fare was so plain that we used to look forward with great anxiety to our vacation time when we might go to our homes and from the plenteous stores of our friends, fill up the waste places in our jackets.

Having gone through with our annual examination at the close of the term of 1847 we were jubilant, hilarious, —and hardly knew how to contain ourselves. Several of us big boys were in the school room. Some were lying on the desks, others were sitting on their stools. I was sitting on a chair behind the teacher's desk, and all in the dark. Two of the boys whom I shall call by their first names, William and Abel, were scuffling

about on the floor. They were feeling gay. Vacation had commenced. The next day we were to leave for home. Abel wore slippers, and slipped behind the door which stood wide open. William was feeling for him, when the matron tripped in. He heard her footsteps, and supposing her to be the fellow he was searching for, grabbed her rather roughly, saying, "Now I've got you, I'll make your bowels yearn!" The voice of the matron as she inquired if Canisky was in the room, showed Will his mistake, and he let go of her, slinking away in the dark, without one word of apology.

To show that persons without sight can sometimes see the point of a joke as well as other people, and that retaliation is as necessary in peace as in war, I will mention one more little circumstance in which I was personally interested, and for which I have never yet felt like upbraiding myself. I had obtained permission to go down town one Saturday to purchase a new coat. Having selected what was then called a business coat, made with a capacious pocket on each side, I put it on, found it a good fit, and came up to the Institution just as the supper bell was ringing, went in and took my place at the table. I was seated between two of the students who were as full of mischief as our tea was of flies. Under pretence of examining my new coat, they

slipped several slices of buttered bread into its yawning pockets, at the same time praising the quality of cloth to divert my attention. Having occasion to use my handkerchief, I discovered the conspiracy, put the bread back on the plate, and mildly informed the young gentlemen that a day of retribution was coming,—that hard jokes like hard bullets sometimes rebounded and hurt the very ones that fired them. Here the matter was dropped, and nearly forgotten by the two rogues who played the trick on me.

On showing the coat to the matron, I found it had been badly greased, and resolved to retaliate. One of the young men was very dressy, and had lately purchased for himself a pair of very fine doeskin breeches, of which he was extremely proud. Having provided myself with a piece of shoemaker's wax, I waited for an opportunity to give him what I called a waxed end. One Sunday when I knew he had on those seven-dollar pants, I hurried down to the dining room at the first tap of the bell and had just time to spread a nice plaster on the stools each side of me, before the boys came in and took their accustomed seats at the table. By the time the meal was over, the wax was so well warmed that it adhered as firmly to the seats of their pants, as to the stools on which they sat, and which I was told came up

with them when they rose to leave the dining room. Anticipating the storm of invectives that must soon break over my head, I slipped from the room before the bell sounded the signal to leave,—at the risk of being called back by the Superintendent,—and found shelter in some quiet corner where I listened with exultant satisfaction to the amusing comments made by the boys on the uses of the waxed end. Should this truthful account of our schoolboy days find the ear of J. B., who is still alive and prosperous, he will doubtless remember the sad end of those doeskin breeches.

It will hardly be credited when I say that unlimited power of corporeal punishment was permitted by the managers of an Institution so humane in its designs, so noble in its aims, so Christlike in its missions, as the N. Y. Institution for the blind; and yet it is true. I have known boys and even young men to be whipped until the coats on their backs were cut in strips. I came very near being whipped several times, and that too for very slight offenses. Once for refusing to pump water for the laundry, on the plea that "I came to learn books and not how to pump; I had already served my apprenticeship at that business." I was summoned to the office, charged with insubordination, and narrowly escaped a sound thrashing.

The last straw that broke the camel's back, and banished the rod from the Institute, was an event so important, and had in it so much of the ludicrous, that I must not pass it over. We were in the habit of talking, laughing, and keeping up a racket in the dormitory for some time after retiring. This had been forbidden. One night when we were joking, telling stories and having our fun, the Superintendent slid slyly in and listened for some time to the noise and confusion. During a slight lull in the storm one of the boys heard a footstep, and supposing the Frenchman had come to lock the doors he called out, "Halloo, John, have you brought my saddle home?" "David! David!" came in a familiar voice, "where are you?" but David was silent. His bed was found, however, the clothes stripped off, and the ratan brought down with terrible precision on his bare skin, raising a ridge at every blow. By this time it was very still as well as very dark in the bedroom. "George! George!" spoke out the same familiar voice, "where are you?" "Here I am, Mr. C., right this way." And there he was, sure enough, and in a moment the ratan was there too. The bed clothes were stripped off and his back and bare legs were cut in ridges. The storm of passion having now spent itself the Superintendent walked quietly over to his own room, to

repent, I hope, for this piece of cruelty, and to pray for moderation and Divine grace, which he and we all so much needed. He was naturally a kind-hearted man, and tried, I believe, to be a Christian, but he had great faith in the rod. The boys who had been so unmercifully castigated brought their complaint and flagellated backs before the managers, who at once relieved the Superintendent of his whipping prerogative, if not of his propensity.

I think corporeal punishment is not now permitted in any of our Institutions; at least I hope it is not. Other and more humane modes of punishment should be adopted. Flogging is so debasing and humiliating that it should be resorted to only under the most desperate circumstances. Obedience to parents may sometimes be enforced by this kind of discipline, but it should always be done with moderation, and without show of anger. Passion begets passion. When it becomes necessary to punish a child, let him feel that you do it in sorrow, and not in anger; that as our Heavenly Father chastises in love, so it is sometimes the duty of earthly parents. But this prerogative of parental government should seldom if ever be delegated.

Another instance in which strategy triumphed over what seemed to us to be rigorous rule, when open hos-

tility must have proved disastrous, may be here mentioned. The Superintendent, who knew about as much of music as a horse does of philosophy, made a rule that the band and choir should each practice two evenings every week, during the hours from prayers till bed-time, —or from eight to ten o'clock This we regarded as an infringement upon our rights, as this time had always been allowed us for recreation; and we resolved to get as much fun out of it as possible, and ultimately to defeat the project. Accordingly, when the choir met for practice, we spent the time in laughing, talking, flirting, and occasionally singing a piece, just to keep the lion,— as we called the Super,—in his den. But he, having received reports of this kind of practice, appointed Miss Kate, one of the assistant music teachers, (who it was believed curried favor with the officers by reporting mischief,) to take charge of the choir, and to keep us singing, and to give us no time for chatting or flirting. On the next evening for choir practice, Miss Kate was on hand and took her position as leader. She ordered the organist to play Jackson's Te Deum, and us to sing it. Having improvised a short prelude, the organist started in with a full organ, but no one sang except Kate, who could hardly make her shrill, piping voice heard. She persevered however, to the end, and then

ordered the organist to play the Gloria in Excelsis, with a light organ, which he did on the upper bank of keys, pianissimo. Having sung this through alone, she demanded to know why we refused to sing. We replied that she was not our leader; that we believed in a republican form of government, and had elected our leader by a unanimous vote; we must decline, therefore, to be directed by any other. At this she left the chapel in high dudgeon, and doubtless reported the indignity she received, at headquarters: and we went on practicing in the old way, and were never afterward interfered with.

In our band practice we followed out very much the same program. We spent most of the time in talking, telling stories and cracking jokes at each others' expense. One evening when we were having rather more fun and making rather more noise about it than usual, the Super came up to the music room and with some asperity in his voice announced that hereafter the band would practice in the large school room, and that he himself would be present and oversee the matter. This was good enough. We entertained the highest respect for the Super's literary attainments, but we knew he had no ear for music, and couldn't tell Hail Cadoodle from Yankee Columbia. So we agreed to give him one of the loudest

serenades he ever heard. We notified the boys who beat the drum and cymbals to be on hand, and to get as much noise out of those instruments as possible. On the next evening, true to his promise, the Super was there, and took his place behind the teacher's desk, with the evening paper, intending to improve the time by looking over the city news and gossip while we were blowing our wind away on some old march or quickstep that we had played over hundreds of times. The band was composed of ten instruments—a piccolo, three clarinets, two French horns, two trombones, a drum and cymbals. At the signal of the leader, who played the E flat clarinet, we all struck in on Yankee Doodle with a blast that would have astonished a Chinese mandarin. The piccolo screamed, the clarinets shrieked, the horns bellowed, the trombones cracked, the drum thundered, and the cymbals slashed and clanged like a pair of Chinese gongs. Over and over we played the same piece, from forte to fortissimo, faster and faster, until the Super, finding it impossible to read in such a din, began to cry, "Stop! stop!" But his voice was drowned in a raging sea of music,—in the blast of the horns, the booming of the big drum and clash of cymbals. We blew until we could see stars, and rushed through the measures like so many race horses. At last he sprang to his feet,

pounded on the desk, and shouted, "For heaven's sake, stop this noise!" This time the leader heard and signaled "down brakes," but not until after several measures could the trombones and horns call in the brass they had so liberally issued. When silence was restored Mr. C. said: "Boys, I am not much of a judge of music, but it seems to me you make more noise than necessary, and that your pieces are very monotonous." "William," said he, addressing my friend who blew the tenor trombone, "don't you manage to get more noise out of that thing than music? Hereafter you will practice in the music room as before, and I guess one evening in the week will be sufficient for us and for the neighborhood." Whether our Superintendent saw the point of the joke and knew that he was sold we were never able to determine, but one thing is certain, it was a big note, and well played.

The school room was in the second story and directly over the Superintendent's office. One evening a number of us older boys were in the room singing, dancing, and laughing very loud. Not that we had anything in particular to laugh at, but more because there seemed to be so little to laugh about. In the midst of our hilarity the Superintendent came in and shouted, "Silence! silence, boys! Why, you act like a pack of heathen.

What do you suppose the people outside think of us? If I could have my way about it this minute, I'd have you all in the Lunatic Asylum." This effectually silenced us for the time, but the mischief was in us, and would break out occasionally.

Having drawn out this article to a much greater length than I intended at the outset, I ought here to bite off the thread of my narrative; but one event worthy of record is still quite fresh in my memory and deserves at least a passing notice. Sometime in the early part of the summer of 1847, it was announced to us that General Winfield Scott was in the city, and would pay a flying visit to the Institution. We had heard of the daring deeds of this brave man at the battles of Lundy's Lane, Chippewa, Queenston Heights, &c., and of his ability as Commander-in-chief during the late war with Mexico, and we anticipated his coming with pleasure. The band practiced Hail to the Chief. The Star Spangled Banner, Hail Columbia, and the American Doodle we could have played with our eyes shut, had we been deaf and dumb. Miss Crosby and Miss Bullock, who were the poets of the Institute, prepared reception speeches, praising the General's prowess in flowing numbers. In order to receive this gigantic military chieftain with all the honor and display of

which the Institute was capable, we,—the members of the band, were stationed in the front yard, at the entrance of the great hall door. A number of the young ladies were dressed in white, and placed in a semicircle on the other side of the entrance. Floral decorations beautified the parlors, halls and chapel. When the General and his attendants alighted from their carriage, we were ready at the signal to strike up Hail to the Chief, which we really played very well, and with great enthusiasm. The General came up, was introduced to the faculty, shook hands with each member of the band, bowed and gave his hand to the ladies, and then marched up into the chapel. After a short and very appropriate address of welcome by the Superintendent, the choir and singing classes accompanied by the great organ, sang in chorus, Hail the Conqueror of Many Battles. The General's rather pompous reply I cannot now recall; but he said in substance: "I did not anticipate this cordial greeting. It is as unexpected as undeserved. If I have served my country, I have only done my duty. But I am happy on this occasion, to see so many bright faces, and to hear so many cheerful voices where I supposed sorrow clouded the brow, and grief filled the heart." After some complimentary remarks to the officers, the tall General, who stood six feet five

inches in his military boots,—sat down, but was even then as high as many of the city magnates who stood about him. Miss Fanny Crosby then delivered an original poem in her usual felicitous style, after which the gallant General arose, and presented his sword to the facetious Fanny, saying, "I have never surrendered this sword to any man, but to the charms and witchery of woman, I always surrender,—not only my sword, but my heart."

I regret, now, that I did not keep a journal of my Institution life, so that I might have given to the public fuller, and more accurate reports of those great occasions. I had intended in these pages, to give my readers some account of the routine of duties and labors at such an Institution;—of the studies pursued, of the various methods of instruction adopted, of the progress we were able to make in the arts, sciences, literature and mechanics;—of the sports and amusements in which we engaged; how we danced with the dining room girls, flirted with the seamstresses, and took clandestine strolls and promenades with the girls by imaginary moonlight; but the limit of this present volume will not allow.

I trust that what I have here written, will not be construed into any invidious design on my part, to take

sides against the officers, or to place them in a false light before the world. I have written only what I believe to be the truth. I had a strong affection for the old Institution, and my attachments lasted for many years. Its spacious rooms, its echoing halls, its shaded walks and play-grounds still live in my dreams. While a pupil, I looked forward with a sort of dread, to the time when I should be obliged to cut loose from the fostering care and protection of the old home in which I had spent eight of the happiest years of my life, when I must leave its safe and quiet harbor, and push out into the rough sea of life to paddle for myself. Many of the graduates had the same feeling, and lingered within hailing distance of the old ship; but I manned my little bark with all the fortitude I could muster, and pushed boldly out for myself. It is now more that twenty-five years since I thus weighed anchor and started on the voyage of life alone. I have had some smooth sailing, and some rough seas and adverse winds. At the age of thirty-five I entered the harbor of matrimony, and took in a mate who has bravely done her part to keep the craft afloat. We have picked up little waifs from time to time, which the angels let drop from their wings, until we have now five,—making in all a crew of seven, —which I fear would swamp my little bark if the Lord's

hand were not beneath us, and his loving arms around us. Sometimes the skies seem very dark and threatening, for the competition between eyes and fingers is all unequal, the balance being largely in favor of eyes.

The world is slow to believe that a man without sight can do any thing as well as a man who can see. Nor do I wonder at this. Men who rely so entirely on their sight for all that they do, cannot understand how these same things can be as well done without sight. I am often astonished that people place so much confidence in us as they do. I bring no complaint against the American people, having always received a reasonable amount of patronage in my enterprises. Therefore I am not misanthropic. I believe in God and humanity, and at fifty years of age, with nothing to fall back upon but my own efforts, and the help of my noble wife, I write with my own hand a new book, hoping by its sale to support my family, clothe, feed and educate my children. If in this I fail, God only knows what I shall do. Would that I might fully accept the wise counsel of the inspired poet, who says: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee."

Should I never be permitted to write another line, or to speak another word of solemn warning to my friends

and children, I would say with my last breath, " Trust in God, and try to lift up fallen humanity."

Whoever lives for self, and self alone,
Shall die at last in debt to Earth and Heaven;
To Earth, for countless blessings shared by none;
To Heaven, for grateful tributes never given.

But he who lives to elevate his race,
To lift the fallen and the poor down-trod,
Shall see the Savior in his mirrored face,
And walk the world with Charity and God.

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